

A TELEGRAPHIC DESPATCH.

BY JESSIE JESSAMINE.

"SHADE of Franklin protect us!" Surely, the knuckles of that placid old gentleman could not have received a greater shock, when trudging under a thunder cloud in the rosy month of June, one hundred years ago, he with his little iron-pointed, silken kite, enticed the lightnings down—than did my feelings when standing, brush in hand, on a bright May morning, 1850, I was handed the following "despatch:"

"TELEGRAPH OFFICE, Balt. May 6th.

DEAR COZ—I am escorting a female relative north—will take H— on my route—expect us to-morrow, early train, FRANK CURTIS."

"Shade of Franklin protect us!" I exclaimed, throwing it from me—"was there ever anything so provokingly unfortunate?"

There we were in the midst of "house-cleaning"—superintendent of which I had been duly installed by my dear mother only a day or two before.

"For," said she, "young ladies cannot hope to make good housewives for others, unless they first serve an apprenticeship in their paternal homes."

And here was I—taking my first lesson—every carpet up—half the furniture sent off to the cabinet-maker to be varnished—blinds hauled down—bedsteads stripped—in short, everything "topsy turvy." All this confusion and a beau in prospect. What *was* to be done?

Frank was a far-off cousin of mother's—he had been here before, and I knew he loved to see everything in "apple-pie order"—and also that precious little work could be done when he was an inmate.

We had engaged but one assistant—and had intended taking it leisurely—but here was a damper.

I summoned the household—a grand consultation was held over the untimely note; and after exhausting every exclamation deprecatory of visitors in general, and this one in particular in house-cleaning times—we ended by declaring that Frank was a noble fellow with all his oddities.

"And I for one," said mother, "shall be right glad to see him."

"Oh, delighted," I chimed in, "only there is so much to do, and no time to do it in."

"But come, he will." So calling Dinah from

her half-cooked dinner, and Jim from his work in the dining-room, I assigned them all their tasks—and everything went on right merrily.

By three in the afternoon we were ready for the carpets, and securing the aid of the man who brought them in, well-shaken, we laid and tacked them with the precision of an upholsterer.

This done, it needed but the arranging of the furniture and the disposing of some summer drapery about the windows, and over the large French mirrors, to make the appearance and comforts of the parlors complete.

When we came down to tea that evening, we announced that the "spare chambers" were in "perfect order," and upon comparing notes, we found that everything was in tolerable readiness for the expected arrival. And when we assembled in our spacious parlors that night, it was with light hearts and merry voices, all feeling that they had added their mite to the clean and cheerful comfort which reigned there.

And here let me say that those young ladies who eschew household affairs, and every domestic arrangement, know not the calm satisfaction and conscious pleasure that fills one's heart as one gathers around the tidy centre-table, or clusters with mamma and the little ones about the bright hearth-stone neatly swept by one's own hand.

But we will not stop to moralize, as we are all ready for Frank. And sure enough the next morning the omnibus drove to the door, and out jumped Frank, never looking around, though we were all impatient to greet him, but seeming wholly intent upon guiding the tiny feet and fairy form of the lady he had in charge.

A few moments and they were fairly emerged; and the hasty cousinly kiss being over, he introduced her as "Miss Barton," whose mother we had all seen; "as to this lady," said he, gaily, "I can only say it may take you sometime to understand her—but before very long you will, I dare say, acknowledge her in every way worthy of her maternity."

Frank, as I have said, had been with us before. Two summers ago he wrote on to mother, telling her that though he had never seen us, his mother assured him he would be kindly received for her sake. "And I am the more inclined to come at this time," he added, "as my dear mother has set her heart upon my marrying; and as I am

not one of the most energetic men in the world, I have thought one of your spirited, rosy-cheeked northern women would be the very thing."

"The very thing indeed!" I indignantly exclaimed, as I read the letter. "I wonder if he thinks our charming northern women are to be had for the asking?—or that they will waste their sweets upon a proud, indolent, conceited nabob?"

"Oh, you are too severe, my daughter," replied my mother, calmly, "Frank is, I have reason to believe, an excellent young man—and now I think of it," she continued, "there's my favorite niece, Lucy. She has signified her intention of visiting us at no distant day. Why not hasten her a little, that she and Frank may meet here? They would suit admirably."

My mother bent upon match-making! Ah, well, so be it. That very day I wrote to Lucy D— to lose no time in joining us. After telling her of the gentleman's avowed motive in coming north, I concluded with—

"You cannot but admire my disinterestedness and magnanimity in inviting you here at this time—thus foregoing all chance of a conquest on my part—inasmuch as the gentleman is of exemplary morals—has unbounded wealth, and still a large expectancy from his mother."

Lucy came, and so did Frank Curtis—and never did mortal beings devise, plan, and manœuvre more to bring about the union of two hearts, than did one and all of us from the head of the house down to Sister Lizzie, who had just reached her teens.

Frank was just formed to captivate one of Lucy's disposition and temperament. He was quite tall in person—but by his broad shoulders and fine expansive chest, was relieved from every appearance of awkwardness, which so often mars the effect in very tall men.

He had moreover a pleasant countenance, a fine hazel eye, and black hair and whiskers—just enough of the latter to give him with his erect form a slightly martial air. And then such teeth! I have watched them often as with his bewitching, quiet smile he discoursed to us of his pleasant southern home, or descanted upon the fidelity of some favorite slave, and wondered how Lucy could resist him.

His manner was at times gay and dashing—ready for all sorts of fun—and again he would turn from it at a moment's warning, and hang for days over the sick cradle of our boy.

Indeed one could not but love him—yet there was something unsatisfactory and provoking about him too. I cannot describe it, nor explain myself better than by saying he was forever *disappointing* one.

Just as you had him wound up to the very

point desired, and you felt sure from his nodding assent to your premises—and his "ah! is it possible," "oh, certainly," &c., as you progressed in your argument, that he could not but agree with you in your conclusion—lo! he was off at a tangent, declaring that it might all sound very well, but *his* experience had taught him differently and so on. Indeed, I never have decided to this day, whether he does it for mischief, or whether contradiction is an innate defect.

Now Lucy was altogether the reverse of this—with a skin of remarkable clearness and purity of texture—and features almost perfect in their regularity—with a person of exquisite mould, and a grace of manner altogether winning, she had that frank, artless, open-hearted simplicity now so seldom found, but which our grand-dames tell us was quite the fashion in their day.

In truth, she seemed just the being to neutralize a character like that of Frank's.

She never for a moment concealed her admiration of "Mr. Curtis," and though she was not forward, showed her readiness to walk or ride with him as the case might be. Truth to tell, she was always assigned to him as a matter of course, and we never started off for a walk that Frank did not mechanically offer his arm; or saunter along at the side of Lucy.

Our town abounds in sweet walks and shady trees—hardly a day passed that we did not ramble off in some direction, and when I happened to lead the way, I never failed to hurry my companion with a most commendable zeal till we reached our place of destination.

Or if we chanced to fall behind, I saw a thousand beauties over which to linger in the gentle waves of the Susquehanna as they swept past us tinted with the rich sunset hue—or perchance I culled the wild flowers from its banks—or casting my eye to the opposite shore, would go off into raptures about the green hills which rise there with so cultivated an air; and so aristocratic withal that one would scarcely think we have still with us the "oldest inhabitant," who remembers when the beast of the forest had there his "den"—and when the Indian girl made her wild toilet in the waters that wash their base.

Anything and everything that Frank and Lucy might walk undisturbed. Often and often I have watched them in their quiet course—she with her head slightly inclined toward him—while his I fancied was bent eagerly down, drinking in her slightest accent.

The very night before Lucy went—I had as was my wont outwalked them—and as they approached the stile where we were seated I felt sure from the conscious blush upon her cheek, and the half-dubious, half-satisfied air of Frank that matters had come to a crisis—and with a

knowing look I said, "I trust your ramble has been a pleasant one?" "Oh! delightful," answered Lucy, in a moment, while Frank remained as I thought in silent embarrassment.

Well, Lucy went—Frank seeing her a few miles on her homeward journey. I was all anxiety you may be sure, besides had some pride in wishing to feel that my manœuvring was not all lost. So a day or two after, I was enumerating her many virtues, to each and all of which Frank only nodded his approval.

At length in despair of getting a direct opinion unasked, I abruptly said, "well, tell us now, Frank Curtis, what do *you* think of our sweet Cousin Lucy?"

"Oh! she's well enough," he answered, "but give me a girl that don't shriek at the buzz of a bee, nor faint at the sight of a harmless snake. Besides I never did like these beauties—especially your blonde beauties—they are too timid and amiable—and then they take your admiration so much as a matter of course; they expect it."

"Expect it!" I repeated, warmly—"Lucy Douglass never *expected* the admiration of any one."

"Oh! I was not thinking just at the instant of your cousin," he answered, with provoking coolness. "I was speaking in general terms."

"Ah! it seems to me, Frank," said I, reproachfully, "that you ought to think of no one else after all that has passed."

"After all that's passed—why, coz, you amaze me. It's not possible that Lucy for a moment supposed—I never dreamed—who would have thought." But I waited for no explanation, and swung out of the room with quite an air of indignation, and hurried to mother's room that she might condole with me on the failure of all our plans.

When did woman acknowledge herself vanquished? I began to think I had mistaken my man. "He is certainly a clever fellow," I said, "and Lucy though pretty, *was* too tame for him. If I could only get Grace Clarence to come over as if by accident," I thought. "She is the very antipodes of Lucy."

Tall, commanding figure—hair that falls in curling masses about her pale and rather melancholy cheek—and an eye dark as ebony, that looks out from a soul proud with exalted intellect and conscious superiority. "That will do exactly." And in less than three days Grace was sitting in our parlor side by side with Frank Curtis!

I felt that with her our movements must be much more adroit. In truth, that we dare not let her for a moment suppose that she was brought here with the expectation of making a conquest.

Grace was a girl of remarkable self-possession. Never under any circumstances did she lose that calm dignity and propriety of manner which is sure to characterize the well-bred and high-minded woman.

Indeed so much did her calm stateliness of manner, which was perfectly natural, differ from my own warm and impulsive temperament, which is quite as natural, that I was at a loss at first how to conduct my mode of attack.

I, however, set my wits to work to plan various excursions aquatic and equestrian, where I thought there was any possibility of the occurrence of any untoward circumstance—something just startling enough to bring into action Grace's habitual presence of mind. But boats would not upset, nor would our "gallant steeds" prove faithless to their riders.

At last a little incident took place in our own parlor divested of all romance to be sure—but which I was certain would fix matters at once.

Our dear little Tom, a sweet, rosy-cheeked boy of three years, had been quietly playing about, when suddenly he choked, coughed, and his face assumed a purple hue. We all jumped and screamed—while I snatched the child up, calling loudly, "mother—sister—come, quick, Tom is dying."

I say all—all but Grace. She seeing at once what was the matter, rushed after me and hastily taking the little fellow from me, thrust her fingers down his throat and drew out a large button!

"That was nobly done, Grace," said Frank, relieving her at the same time of the struggling boy: "You have by your uncommon nerve and admirable presence of mind saved the life of this sweet child." And then he added playfully, but I thought somewhat seriously, "Grace Clarence will be a prize for any man!"

"Fairly committed," thought I, and making an excuse to take Tom to mother, I left them alone.

All would not do. Another month rolled round. Grace and Frank were still here, but no proposal; and though he had mingled occasionally with the refined and polished society which adorns this inland town, he was summoned home at last with a heart apparently untouched, and a person free as air.

He bade us farewell in an assembled group—and if I except one short letter announcing his safe arrival at home, this was the last we had seen or heard of him.

Several little circumstances had occurred, however, to lead me to suspect that Grace had not been kept quite so much in ignorance of his movements as had we. And somehow when this "despatch" reached us, announcing his intention of diverging so greatly from the main route, I

could not but think that Grace had something to do with it.

However *my* digression is much more glaring, you will say, and not so easily forgiven, inasmuch as you are waiting to hear something of the "female relative."

Ah! she was a beauty—not one of "your blondes" neither, nor yet was she a brunette. But just enough of the rich, red northern blood tintured her downy cheek and ripened her pouting lips, to do away with a slight hue of what might otherwise have been called southern.

The color of her eyes too was most bewitchingly uncertain. Frank called them black, and for a moment one might agree with him, but the long, silken lashes threw them so in the shade, that just as you were declaring that they were a—a light hazel, you are stalked into the belief that they are coal black. Then again when she opened them full upon you, you were pleased to find them beautifully blue.

Any little restraint that might have lingered consequent upon the bustle of getting ready for them, vanished in an hour under her genial smiles and pleasant volubility. Long before dinner she was familiarized with the whole household from "grandma" down. All loved her.

After dinner we girls stole off for an hour's *siesta*, and at six tea was served—upon rising from the table Frank said, "now for a walk—one of our old-fashioned walks, coz, along the mossy bank, or away to some shady grove—anywhere our fancy leads us."

No sooner said than done, and after an hour's ramble we found ourselves on the grass-skirted and clean graveled walks of "Capitol Hill."

Feeling somewhat weary, we seated ourselves on the stately stone-steps of one of the "departments," where the thick extending branches from a clump of lofty trees near by, twine their rich green foliage in and around the massive pillars, making a delicious, quiet retreat in which to pass the twilight hour.

Here we remained long and pleasantly, each one relating in turn some amusing incident of "by-gone days." I among the rest telling Miss B— of Frank's sad and cavalier treatment of our two sweet cousins, warning her to beware of him, for I pronounced him a complete *male coquette*!

"Talking of cousins," said Frank, laughing it off—"talking of cousins reminds me of a passage in my 'love's history,' though I don't know that it's worth while to tell it, as cousinly affection seems to be exhausted in this circle."

"No such thing," said Lizzie, a sweet, blue-eyed girl, laying her hand coaxingly upon his shoulder. "I do love a story, and above all one of your stories, Cousin Frank."

"Well, then," began Frank, "you 'must know' it was at my own home in the balmy south that this occurred, some, sometime ago (and a roguish smile played upon his face.) Our folks are hospitable in the true Virginian sense.

"They are always gathering around them some choice spirits; and Sister Kate, of whom you have often heard me speak, is forever scouring the country either in person or by some *mail proxy*, in search of some companion, somebody to come and stay with her.

"So one calm October morning, Kate came bounding into my room quite out of breath, with an open letter in her hand. 'Look here, Brother Frank; you know I wrote to New York for Cousin Mary to come and spend the winter with us; never dreaming she could be induced to leave the gaieties of that great metropolis for our dull home, but here it is—she's coming—she'll be here in a day or so.'

"I gave an impatient pshaw!—such a cousin. 'Why, Kate, I was at Uncle Sam's when she was ten or twelve years old, and an uglier little mortal I never laid my eyes on.'

"'Well,' said she, 'you'll lay your eyes on this self-same mortal very soon again. And I do beg now, Frank, if she should be somewhat plain or even ugly, that you will not put on that haughty, indifferent air of yours—but be polite for my sake.'

"'Or for the ladies *own* sake,' said the bland voice of my mother. We both started, and looking around there, leaning on the arm of my mother was—was a being. How shall I describe her?"

"Never mind the description," said Lizzie—"on with the story."

"Well, it was Cousin Mary! and after Kate had hugged and kissed her to her heart's content, my mother handed her over to me, and I assure you I welcomed her in the most approved cousinly manner.

"Days and weeks flew by. We walked and rode, and sailed together, till at last I began to suspect myself most desperately in love! over head and ears in love!

"Somehow, when Mary came about me with her sweet, endearing ways, it never pleased me half so well if she called me coz: that sweet, familiar word that I at first thought so bewitching, began to fall painfully upon my ear; and once or twice I said, 'oh! call me Frank; just plain Frank.'

"I think she half suspected me; for she looked archly into my face, and said, 'ah, then, Frank, don't you want me for a relation?' How I longed to fold her to my heart; and tell her how near and dear a tie, I hoped, would one day bind us.

"But Cousin Mary was changeful in her moods; one never knew how to take her. Sometimes she

was wild and playful, and this became her most. Often indeed; most often she would put on her sentimental city airs, as I called them, and wonder how we could be so unceremonious! 'Gentlemen in the south were so familiar,' &c. I also noticed that these remarks were introduced most inopportunately, just at the very time that I had mentally resolved to snatch the first moment of solitude with her to tell my tale of love—but these terrible sentimental fits of hers would set me all wrong again.

"And so the time came round when Mary was to leave us for a couple of weeks, on a visit to an uncle still further south, without my having committed myself in the slightest point.

"Mary was gone! I was inconsolable. How I did bless my abominable stupidity or bashfulness, and wonder I could let any feeling overcome the all-absorbing love which filled my soul.

"Write to her I would not; for sometimes Mary was a quiz, and I feared she might serve up the precious *billet doux* for the edification of my fair cousins with whom she was staying.

"At length Mary came again. Kate had gone to spend a day or two with a neighbor; and as I lifted Mary from the carriage I ventured to say, 'oh! how glad I am to have you here once more!' then thinking I had said too much, 'Sister Kate will be so happy.'

"As we walked up the spacious hall we were alone, and I stooped to kiss her cheek. She raised her hand to interrupt it, saying, 'no, no, Mr. Frank! I am no longer on your list of cousins; pray be civil.' 'Oh! but let me beg you, Mary,' the drawing-room door opened, and my mother advanced with her warm welcome, and I was left with the confession lingering on my lips.

"After tea I found my cousin was in her sentimental mood, so I proposed a walk. She languidly consented, and we wandered forth.

"The night was splendid, and as I drew her arm in mine I felt, indeed, I think I may safely say, we both felt that 'moonlight hours are meet for love.'

"'We'll take the little path to the lake,' said I; 'there is something so refreshing in its green banks, so calm and beautiful in its deep, still waters, that I think we shall both enjoy a walk in that direction.'

"'You seem depressed to-night, coz,' she said, 'I beg pardon, Mr. Frank, I mean; are you ill, or how shall I account for the mood that's upon you?'

"'Oh! never mind me, Mary. Why should you?' Then looking onward, 'I declare there's my favorite boat moored just by the willow. If Sambo was here what a delightful sail we might have.'

"That instant Sambo hove in sight. 'Why,

Sambo, where did you come from?' 'Oh! jis thought massa might want to go a boatin by de light ob de moon.' 'Very well, Sambo, bring the boat close into shore. Step carefully, Mary,' and in a moment we were floating quietly on the blue waters.

"The scene was enchanting; it was fairy-like. The Naiads of the stream might see the silvery fishes reposing by moonlight on its pebbly bottom; and myriads of stars danced upon its dimpled surface.

"Silently we moved along. My breath came thick and fast. I saw that Mary expected some word of love from me; perhaps hoped for it.

"At length I broke the painful silence by saying, 'Sambo, sing—sing us something low and plaintive.' I wanted something in accordance with the scene. 'Yes, massa,' and as his full clarion voice rose upon the air, I felt that now the propitious time had come."

Here we all clustered still closer to Frank breathless with attention.

"'Mary!' I said, and took her hand in mine. I saw the flush upon her brow; but putting on an air of careless gaiety, she answered, 'well, Cousin Frank.' 'Mary!' for a moment she raised her beaming, sparkling, speaking eyes of jet to mine, and anon her long, dark lashes swept her crimson cheek, 'Mary!' and pressing her hand still closer, I exclaimed, '*this is classic ground I do assure you!*'"

"How absurd!" said I, rising indignantly, "it was just like you, Frank. It is a way you have of raising expectations that are never to be realized."

"Not so very absurd after all," said Frank, laughing heartily, "for having got once more on terra-firma we threw romance aside; and talked of stern realities. In the course of which I asked the lady in plain terms if she would take me 'for weal or for woe?'—to which she answered modestly, but decidedly, '*yes!*'" Then rising and advancing toward Miss B——, "and I now introduce you to *my wife*, Miss Mary Curtis!"

Such expressions of amazement—such kisses and congratulations as followed the denouement I leave you to imagine.

Upon reaching the house my first impulse was to fly to mother's room, and be the first to tell her that after all our efforts Frank had succeeded in making his own match!

Mr. and Mrs. Curtis staid with us for a couple of weeks, serving only to confirm us in the wisdom of Frank's choice. When we parted, it was with mutual regrets and promises to continue a friendship formed under circumstances so amusing.

This morning I got a letter from Mary, dated, "My own home, New York city." In which she says, "Frank bids me tell you, that his friends

all think he makes a *point* of *disappointing*; and to retrieve his character in this respect he is determined to give me a view of that 'classic ground' he talked so eloquently of. For this purpose we have taken passage in the steamer 'Europa,' which sails in a couple of weeks. After staying long enough in London to see the 'sights,' we shall cross over to the Continent—visit Paris and other places of note; and then luxuriate for a month or so in the rosy twilight of Italy."

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AGNES PERCIVAL; OR, TRUE LOVE'S DEVOTION.

BY HENRY MAY.

CHAPTER I.

It was one of the pleasant days of the season—early May—and the busy world of mighty London poured forth its tens of thousands on the sparkling flag-stones; the air was fresh and balmy, and as it floated through the close, pent-up streets, many an aching heart and weary head felt its holy power.

In a low tenement, situate in a bye-street of the great metropolis, where seldom the sound of lordly equipages was heard, and where aristocratic feet never trod the rude pavements, sat a young man of some five-and-twenty summers, busily engaged at a painting placed before him on an easel. The countenance was partially averted, but even the classic profile exposed to view, gave one an idea of nobleness of spirit and consciousness of superiority which artificial show will fail to produce. High and broad was the massive forehead, with veins of thought interwoven with the few lines which care had wrought there; dark and piercing were the lustrous eyes; and a profusion of dark, wavy hair fell around the perfectly developed head; while the regularity of the strictly beautiful features, and the proud curl of the nether lip, gave him a singularly commanding, refined and high-born appearance.

The mean apartment in which he sat, and which was evidently an artist's studio, was sadly out of repair. The room was very low and very small, and the discolored ceiling and stained walls announced that the rain had penetrated there recently. There were but two windows, one of which commanded a view of the narrow street, and the other looking into a small back yard, where a few hollies and one or two other shrubs were just unfolding their leaves. All the prospect which was commanded from either casement was stacks of chimneys, a few back windows, clouds of smoke, and the neighboring church spire.

The interior of the apartment was similar to any painter's studio, being embellished with various articles of *vertu* scattered on every hand. Madonna heads after the old masters, most gloriously beautiful; pieces of chaste and elegant statuary; life-like and graceful Hebes; and bewitching Venuses were the principal features of the room;

while a few instruments of music—a guitar and harp—occupied their respective places.

Suddenly the artist tossed back his head from the work wearily, and half closed his eyes, while a low sigh escaped involuntarily from the open lips.

"It is strange," he said to himself, in low and broken accents—"it is strange how the fair face of Agnes will haunt me so! I cannot paint a picture but what some feature of hers will appear upon the canvass; and here, in this new painting, I have combined all her unrivalled charms; and the rare loveliness of her heavenly face seems even now beaming upon me."

It was a picture of a beautiful Greek girl which he had been employed upon, and to which he had reference. Fair, indeed, was that angelic face limned upon the canvass with soft, pearly cheeks, carmine-tinted lips, and eyes most darkly, deeply blue; with many an auburn wave of gemmed and braided hair, and a high, marble brow which seemed almost transparent so fair and white was the polished skin. The attitude of the figure was one of infinite grace. The hands, so small and fair, were clasped together upon the full and graceful bosom, while the pure face and spiritual eyes were raised meekly above, and so innocent and angelic was the expression on that beautiful countenance, that it seemed rather the features of some beautiful spirit than one of earthly mould.

For some time the young man remained in the position he had first taken, not a muscle of his countenance moving, and the quick breath coming and going distinctly. But at length he started to his feet, and glancing at a clock in the room which told with a fretting distinctness every moment which passed away, turned impatiently to the window.

"Ten o'clock, and yet she comes not!" he soliloquized, in a somewhat bitter tone—"what should keep her away? I am sure she might have been here!" and with an anxious and expected expression upon his pallid countenance, he commenced pacing the apartment with heavy strides, glancing from time to time at the clock, and muttering to himself.

At last, he heard a light footstep upon the stairs, and in a moment more a low, musical voice uttered his name without.

"Ernest, Ernest! are you here?"

The young man sprang to the door, a radiant smile breaking over his face, and the dark eyes flashing with joy, and the next instant ushered in a young and beautiful girl of some seventeen summers.

"Agnes—dear Agnes!" murmured the artist, as he bent to kiss the fair creature who stood trembling before him; "I was afraid you would not come—I have been waiting impatiently this long while."

"I came as soon as I could escape from the prying eyes of Lady Evelyn," was the quiet reply of the fair girl, as she sank to a seat by the artist's side; "it is so difficult to get a moment's respite from her Argus-like watchfulness, dear Ernest, that you will pardon my want of punctuality!"

"Oh, willingly, Agnes!" was the quick rejoinder, and many a fond and love-like word succeeded, as Ernest, with one arm thrown around the form of the gentle Agnes, and her head bent forward upon his bosom, sat there, in a trance of deep delight.

The portrait of the Greek girl, before alluded to, was, in truth, the very "pictured semblance" of sweet Agnes Percival; yet there was a something lacking about it; the lively and playful vivacity was not there; and there was but *one* expression to the countenance, while to Agnes every new incident, every phase of life, gave a different appearance to the beautiful features. Seldom has a brighter sylph appeared in this nether world of ours, or a more glowing vision glanced across the cheerless earth, than fair Agnes; and Ernest—proud Ernest Grahame—knew it, and was happy that the gentle heart which throbbed within that polished casket beat for him—and him alone!

Many an hour glided swiftly by, and yet the lovers sat there, communing with their own hearts, weaving bright hopes for the future, and *forgetting* the past—that past which had been, so cruel to them. The deep knell of the clock of old St. Paul's striking the hour of two, at length aroused them from their delicious *tele-a-tete*, and admonished Agnes to seek her home.

Gathering the ample folds of her rich shawl around her graceful form, she turned toward the door. One kiss from Ernest was impressed on her yielding lips, one glance from his dark, fascinating eyes rested upon her for an instant, and the next moment, with a low farewell upon her lips, she passed down the creaking stairs of the humble domicil, and, emerging into the narrow street, turned her footsteps in the direction of the elegant mansion of Lady Evelyn Beresford.

Ernest gazed long and vacantly after her fast receding form; and when it disappeared from his view he sank into a seat, and buried his face in his hands convulsively.

ERNEST GRAHAME had first met sweet Agnes Percival at her father's princely mansion in the country, where he had been employed by old Sir Mordaunt Percival to paint the portraits of the family. The Lady Emilia, the mother of Agnes, stately and beautiful, with a proud, stern face and carriage, had been first transferred to the canvass, and all who saw it—even the lady herself—had united in pronouncing it perfect. The majestic head—the peerless features, pale and cold—the commanding feud of the pure alabaster neck—and even the very expression of the immobile countenance, so queenly and beautiful—were pictured to the very life by the faultless hand of Ernest.

Sir Mordaunt sat next, and the proprietor of Percival Hall, with his stern, noble countenance and noble form, was limned upon the easel of Grahame—the erect counterpart of the proud nobleman. But now a more difficult task was Ernest's, to sit day after day and gaze at the rare beauty of the lovely Agnes, and then to transfer the lineaments of that fair face to the easel before him. We say *difficult*—it seemed so indeed to the heart of Ernest, for so radiantly beautiful was Agnes in her purity and innocence, that it seemed almost impossible to catch the heavenly expression which played upon her features like a soft cloudlet upon a June sky, enhancing the beauty of each by the mingling of light and shade.

But at length the ordeal was no longer dreaded. Agnes had not sat but a few times, ere Ernest became strangely interested in the work. He would watch for hours abstractedly, and in a strange mood, for her coming; and when she came to his studio at last radiant smiles would break over his face, and a new and holy light beam in his deep, lustrous eyes. Each sitting was delayed as long as possible, and no perceptible progress was made with the portrait. He would gaze at Agnes for hours, and in a dreamy state, would scarcely touch his pencil to the work; while Agnes—fair Agnes, so sweet and so modest—would blush and look disconcerted, and tremble when he addressed her with his thrilling voice.

Thus week succeeded week, and still each morning found Agnes by the side of Ernest, listening to his manly voice as it murmured soft words, or gazing upon his face, so noble and so beautiful, all-unconscious of its effect upon her young and susceptible heart. But this course of things could not always continue, however much, by two, at least, it might be desired. Lord Percival began to look distrustfully upon Ernest and Agnes as they conversed together in low and tender tones, and to gaze at Grahame searchingly with his dark, piercing eyes; and once, when Ernest was alone in his studio, he had sought him, evidently

with something struggling in his heart to impart to him; but the young man looked so honest and so noble that his heart failed him—and with one glance at the unfinished likeness of his darling and beautiful Agnes, he left the apartment with a troubled expression upon his usually open countenance.

At length the portrait was finished; yet words cannot convey an adequate idea of all the angelic loveliness of that countenance. No pen can depict the matchless grace and beauty of Agnes Percival!

And Ernest, all nobleness and truth, and possessing a soul pure and good, began to feel new and strange emotions kindling in his heart for the gentle Agnes. He would watch for hours each movement of her graceful form, would observe the varying expression which flitted across that fair and tell-tale face until—spell-bound and fascinated—he was overpowered by a vague, delicious faintness, the effect of overwrought feeling.

Agnes had noticed his deportment toward her; now cold, calm and stately, anon, wild and fitful, full of extravagant fancies and morbid dreamings, or with refined and polished bearing, anticipating her slightest wish. And Agnes was not blind to his many attractions, to the accomplishments a good education had procured, and to the real nobility of the character and spirit of the poor, but proud Grahame. Her heart had gone out of her own keeping before she was aware of it.

Was it strange that two such beings as Ernest and Agnes, full of intellect, purity of thought, and similarity of feeling, situated as they were, and thrown into each other's society altogether, should become one in heart and soul?

Ernest Grahame was a scion of a reduced family, once as proud and noble as old England could boast. Gentle blood flowed in his veins—blood which had given strength to the sinews of mighty warriors, or languidly coursed through the arteries of fair and lovely dames. His ancestors could be traced back many centuries—to the wars of the red and white Roses—and still further back to more troublous times. Still it was not this which gave him the proud carriage so habitual to him; it was the self-consciousness of his own noble and upright spirit, and his own superiority over the “common herd.”

Half a century past, and the noble mansion of the Grahames had echoed to merry sounds and gay voices: it was then in the full tide of prosperity: but, alas! a ruinous fire razed it to the ground, and left only a few blackened and smouldering remains to tell the tale of complete destruction; a dark and heavy blight fell upon the fields of the broad domain; the noble forest was hewn down; and it seemed as if some dreadful curse rested upon the manor, for everything went

to a slow but sure destruction. From this time forth the family of the Grahames kept slowly on the wane, decreasing in prosperity and numbers; until at last but two remained—Ernest, who, seeking to procure a livelihood, had exerted his fine talents in an artist's life—and Gerald, an older brother of Ernest, who had sought to repair his broken fortunes in that golden land—the Indies.

Years flew by, and we have narrated the meeting of Ernest with Agnes Percival, of the pure, confiding love which followed; and of their stolen interviews in mighty London. Ernest had asked of Sir Mordaunt Percival the hand of Agnes in marriage; but with many a fierce invective on his head, and many a cruel and galling epithet, he bade the poor and unknown artist leave his presence, and never again mention his love for Agnes.

The bitterness of death was on the unfortunate young man; he could have felled Sir Mordaunt to the floor, but he was the father of her he loved, and he forbore. He felt stunned as if by some mighty and terrible blow; mortification, anger, and sorrow mingled confusedly together; the past was like a deceptive dream—the future swam indistinctly before him. The first object that aroused him was the form of the haughty old lord passing up and down the lofty apartment. Ernest made a strong effort, gave one glance, full of melancholy pride, at the arrogant and heartless Percival, and left the old library with tottering steps.

That night he parted with the weeping Agnes under the old trysting-tree, in the park adjoining the hall; and with one arm thrown about her drooping form, murmured many a soothing and encouraging word in her ear.

“I shall hover around you, dear Agnes! I shall be your guardian angel—my sweet one!” and Ernest hushed the choking sobs and the heart's wild throbbings, by assuring her of his eternal and deathless love for her. They parted with solemn adjurations from on High to assist them in their true and holy affection, and with pledges of mutual love, Agnes to return to her now desolate home, and Ernest to enter again the fickle world, firm in the power of his devoted love for Agnes to resist its temptations.

But now a new fear agitated the hearts of Lord and Lady Percival. Their only child—their sweet Agnes—became daily more pale and thin, and her step less buoyant than of yore. No smiles played now over her countenance, or “wreathed her pallid lips”—no merry warble broke from her throat, but each day she grew more languid and emaciated. At first they were alarmed, fearing it was the hereditary disease of the family—consumption; but at length Lady

Emilia gleaned the secret from her daughter's lips. Agnes loved—yes, loved! passionately, wildly; and the object of that affection was Ernest Grahame!

About this time, a sister of Lady Emilia, requested the company of Agnes in the metropolis that season. For a long time the parents hesitated; but a change of scene, new faces, and the dazzling brilliance of court might, they thought, be beneficial in erasing her love for Grahame, and restoring to her her blooming cheek and buoyant step. In a few weeks Agnes was launched forth into the "world" of fashionable society, under the strict charge and guidance of Lady Evelyn Beresford; who, true to her character of a watchful and jealous duenna, guarded well the footsteps of her young and beautiful protegee.

CHAPTER III.

LATE in the afternoon, Agnes ran up the steps of the mansion of Lady Evelyn Beresford, situated in the most fashionable quarter of the "West End." It was early in the morning that she had left the house, "to make a few calls," she said; and for once Lady Evelyn did not insist upon accompanying her. Since then what had transpired! She had seen Ernest, and many a long and rapturous hour had glided away with him. They had renewed their vows of love and constancy—and hope, bright hope again animated her bosom.

Worn and fatigued by her long walk, she entered the great hall of the stately house. The dinner hour was past, and Agnes immediately sought her own apartment, where she threw herself into a voluptuous *fauteuil*, and gave way to a delightful reverie. But even this pleasure was soon denied her. Lady Beresford, aware that she had returned from her call-giving, soon despatched her *femme de chambre* to the room of Miss Percival, with the request that she would come to her boudoir.

Agnes bowed assent to the woman; and, rising from her recumbent position, bathed her glowing cheek and burning brow with some medicated essence which stood by her side in a glittering vial—"I can meet her now with composure, I trust," she said, to herself, as with a beating heart she left her room to seek the presence of her aunt.

She found the Lady Evelyn awaiting her appearance in a boudoir fitted up with infinite taste and lavish expenditure. There were ornaments of *buhl* and *marquetric*, and *Lèvres china*; statuary elegant and beautiful filled the niches; and cabinet pictures of chaste and exquisite design covered the walls. Lady Beresford herself was in one of her sternest moods, sitting

upright in a large arm-chair drawn before an *escritoire* of polished rose-wood.

As the trembling Agnes entered the apartment she bowed with the utmost coolness and *hauteur*, and motioned her ward to a seat. Agnes sat down—her heart dreading that which was to follow. A gloomy silence of some moments succeeded, which was broken at last by her ladyship in a deep, inflexible tone of voice.

"Miss Percival," she said, in stern tones, which sounded inexpressibly harsh to the ears of her niece, "Miss Percival, I have reason to believe that you have made but few calls to-day—and yet you have been gone a long time. Has your time passed pleasantly?"

Indignant at the humbling words of Lady Evelyn, Agnes drew up her form to its utmost height, and cast on the unamiable, supercilious woman a look of ineffable contempt. Lady Beresford, however, did not seem to observe it, and proceeded in a more cutting and *nonchalant* tone, "tell me, Agnes, where have you been? It is my duty to you and your parents to keep a watchful eye upon your movements!"

Astonished, yet too proud and too honest to prevaricate, Agnes remained silent; but the next moment she burst into a violent flood of tears, and sank upon her knees by the side of the arrogant Lady Evelyn.

"I will tell you all," she said, in a voice broken with sobs; and, in a husky tone, she informed Lady Beresford of her love for Ernest Grahame, and the interview which had occurred that day. But she found no sympathy in the hard and stony heart of the lady who listened to her words with compressed lips and lowering brow.

Before she had concluded her story, Lady Evelyn commanded her to arise and seek her own apartment, as she had no sympathy with love affairs. Agnes did as she was bid, and as she again entered her chamber she sank heavily upon the softly carpeted floor.

The ensuing day Lady Beresford wrote to Sir Mordaunt concerning the interview of Ernest and Agnes, and giving free vent to her own spiteful nature. "It is beyond forbearance," she wrote. "And I cannot permit any lady of *my* household to so far forget her maidenly reserve and dignity as to traverse entire London for the sake of a *tele-a-tele* with a gentleman."

The rage of Lord Percival upon receiving this missive knew no bounds; and even the usually cold and passionless Lady Emilia felt a glow of anger and shame mount to her cheek, that *her* daughter should have so far left behind her womanly pride, as to again hold converse with one who had been rejected by Sir Mordaunt as a husband for his only child.

A few days afterward, the princely equipage

of Lord Mordaunt Percival entered London, and drew up before the palace-like residence of Lady Beresford. Lady Emilia alighted, and was assisted up the steps by an aged servant; and Lady Evelyn met her at the door with extended hand. The meeting between the sisters was cool and constrained; in youth they had been rivals for the hand of Lord Percival, and in age they were barely friends.

But it was the interview with Agnes which was the most painful to the mother's heart. She had resolved to upbraid her—then to expostulate with her; but when she met Agnes she could only sob, "my child—my child!" and clasp her in her arms. Weak from excessive emotion, that proud woman, usually so stately and dignified, half-fainted upon the shoulder of her daughter.

Lady Percival remained in London several days; and when she returned to Percival Hall, Agnes accompanied her. The shades of the evening were closing around as the carriage rolled up the avenue to the mansion; and Agnes gave a faint start as it swept past a huge tree whose overhanging boughs touched the coach. It was the old trysting-tree where she had so often met Ernest.

At length the carriage stopped before the gates of the park, and Lady Emilia alighted: a strong hand was laid on the arm of Agnes, and she was taken quickly from the coach by her father.

"*Girl!*" he muttered fiercely through his compressed lips. "*Girl!* Disgrace to your family! Is it thus you would repay the affection bestowed on you?"

Agnes trembled, and would have fallen to the ground had it not been for the arm of her mother which stole around her waist and supported her. Summoning all her energies, she resolutely advanced, and was soon standing in the entrance-hall of her dear old home.

In the solitude of her own chamber that night Agnes wept long and bitterly; in vain did she endeavor to gain some composure by reflecting on the true, undying love of Ernest, and the promises which he had made; but the grey light of the morning struggled through the closed shutters of the window ere sleep visited her tearful eyelids.

When she descended to the breakfast-room the succeeding morning, she found her parents awaiting her appearance. The repast was eaten in profound silence, and when it was concluded, Sir Mordaunt requested the presence of his daughter in the library. With tottering limbs Agnes followed him into the gloomy apartment, and hushing the wild beating of her full heart, seated herself by his side.

Long and earnest was the conversation which

ensued, and the concluding words were from the lips of Lord Percival.

"Go, now, Agnes," he said; "in a few weeks you must be on your way. In the meantime I shall be preparing everything for your departure."

Agnes was to go to Italy!—delightful, sunny Italy—

"Whose very name hath power to wake
A vision of delight!"

An old nurse was to accompany her, and when they arrived there, Lord Percival had an intimate friend—an opulent nobleman of high standing—in whose house Agnes was to make her home while she sojourned in Florence.

Sir Mordaunt pleaded to his daughter of her really ill-health—her fragile constitution—the necessity of a change of scene—and the benefit of the sunny skies and balmy breezes of the sweet clime of Italia; and Agnes consented to go, as it was the earnest wish of her revered father.

CHAPTER IV.

A BRIGHT summer morning in Florence—fair Florence, the city of marble palaces, of storied renown, of poet's song, and everything beautiful and loving; a bright summer morning, and the cool, dewy breezes of sweet Italy floating lazily between the double lines of stately palaces which adorned the streets of the fair city, and quickening into life as they wandered over the gardens and spicy orange groves which fringed the suburbs of peerless Florence.

Before one of the most magnificent of the marble palazzos of the Strada Novada, a splendid equipage, embellished with a coat of arms, and decorated with costly hangings of bullion and velvet, was drawn up. Presently the door to the princely mansion was opened, and an elderly man and a fair young girl descended the marble steps. They advanced to the carriage—and, as the footmen threw open the door, the gentleman assisted a young and beautiful lady to alight. An older female followed her, and after one embrace of fair Agnes Percival, the daughter of his old friend, the gentleman preceded them up the steps, and ushered them into the lofty hall of the palazzo.

A few moments later, Agnes found herself in one of the most elegant and *recherche* rooms she had ever seen, adorned with costly pictures and rich mouldings, and all those little et ceteras with which a person of refined and judicious taste fits up a boudoir. Throwing off her simple travelling hat and shawl, she turned to a casement which commanded a delightful view of lovely Florence.

For an instant all the combined beauty of that glorious scene, with its gardens, its fountains, its

majestic palaces sparkling in the sun, its dewy groves, its lovely villas, and its grand churches and cathedrals, almost overpowered her.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" broke from her lips, at length, as she clasped her hands together, and remained in a dreamy state contemplating the marvelous beauty of the fairest city of earth. Long did she gaze, completely absorbed in the rare loveliness of the view; and when at last she turned away from the casement, a yet more fervent exclamation of delight trembled on her lips.

In a few days, Agnes had become completely domiciliated in the house of Lord Paolo de Guodini; and almost happy, indeed, was she, as she each day found herself by the side of the good old nobleman, conversing with him on the many topics so interesting to young and old, or singing to him some pensive song in her soft, liquid tones.

For Lilliore de Guodini, the young and charming daughter of her host, Agnes began to feel all the love of a sister, so fair and guileless was the young creature. She was but sixteen, a gay and light-hearted girl, and beautiful withal, who seemed scarcely to enjoy life except in the gay *fete*, the brilliant revel, or the lively *soiree*. Gaiety was her idol, and on its shrine she lavished all her choicest offerings.

How different was Agnes—sweet Agnes, who could enjoy of a quiet morning an agreeable conversation with Signor de Guodini, or amuse him by reading by his side out of some old volume hour after hour. There was an air of home quietude in the pensive manner of the young girl, for the usual buoyancy of youth had been subdued by the deep sorrow which had been her lot to bear.

Weeks had passed away since Agnes first entered the palace of Lord Paolo; and still wan and pale, yet spiritually beautiful, she seemed like some gentle being too pure for earth. It was a pleasant twilight, and she and Lilliore were seated in a delightful arbor in the lovely garden attached to the palazzo, the murmur of soft fountains, and the low sighing of the voluptuous breeze greeting their ears.

Agnes was thinking of times long past—of the manly form of one who was her very ideal, as he seemed again to bend upon her deep, soul-thrilling gaze; and dreaming over again those sweet fancies so dear to her pure, young heart. Her imagination wandered afar off—to the trysting-tree in the home-park—to the low apartment in London where so many happy interviews had been passed, and then to her present situation. Ah, how that gentle girl's heart ached as she thought of Ernest—he who so loved her—so adored her, and who, even then, might be mourning for fear she no longer loved him. Poor Agnes!

Lilliore, the merry yet tender-hearted Lilliore,

had noticed the sad reverie of Agnes, and with the instinctive delicacy of a true woman, had drawn the hand of Agnes within her arm, and led her away down the dewy avenue where the sunbeams kissed the sleepy blossoms, and the zephyrs swayed the sighing shrubs.

"Dear Agnes," murmured the fair girl, as she kissed the pale cheek of her companion, "tell me what sorrow oppresses thee? Am I not a true friend to thee, Agnes—my more than sister?"

For a moment all the long pent-up emotions in the heart of Agnes came struggling to her throat for utterance; but the next instant a weary faintness crept over her, and she could only gasp, "not now—not now, dear Lillie!" and sink heavily into the arms of Lilliore de Guodini.

CHAPTER V.

EACH day stood Ernest Grahame at the window of his studio, gazing anxiously into the street to discern the graceful figure of Agnes approaching his humble home; and each day he again became disappointed, and awaited with impatience the coming of the morrow. The morrow would come at last, but no sweet Agnes Percival with it to cheer his dreary way. Thus days passed, and weeks followed; he began to grow sick at heart—and the fear that Agnes was ill or something had happened to her, would thrust itself upon his mind.

"I will ascertain if my fears are well founded," he said, to himself, at length; and he passed forth into the street, and turned his footsteps toward the mansion of Lady Evelyn Beresford. A vague fear agitated his heart as he arrived in front of the princely residence; but casting off the undefined oppression, he ascended the marble steps with alacrity.

"Was Miss Percival in?" he inquired of the liveried servant who obeyed the ring at the door.

The lacquey shook his head negatively, and turned to depart; but Ernest detained him for a moment, and slipped a golden guinea in his hand. "Could he inform him where Miss Percival was? Was she ill, or had she returned home?"

"She had returned to Percival Hall," he believed. "The Lady Emilia, her mother, had come after her, and taken her with her on her return. Something of importance had evidently transpired; for Lady Evelyn looked sternly at the weeping Agnes, and Lady Percival appeared exceedingly mortified and angry as she handed her daughter into the coach."

Such was the purport of the news imparted by the garrulous footman; and when the door to the mansion was closed upon the stupefied Ernest, he could almost have fallen to the ground, so stunning and unexpected were the tidings. He

had no doubt they had discovered where Agnes had passed the interval of her absence, and had resolved upon some course of punishing the unfortunate girl. The thought that she was to suffer for the pleasure bestowed on him, by gratifying him with an interview, was agonizing; he almost cursed the day he was born; and had the form of the cruel old Sir Mordaunt Percival appeared in his path homeward, he would have wreaked his vengeance upon the proud parent.

But time, the assuager of all griefs, be they ever so violent, gradually left only the memory of that bitter sorrow, and consoled him by the hope of a future meeting with her he loved so well.

"Few save the poor feel for the poor." Ernest had probed the truth of the proverb but too well! Had he but been rich—rich in this world's goods—how gladly—how willingly would Lord Percival have conferred on him the hand of Agnes; but poverty, that most bitter curse to the high-minded, that disgrace—in the eyes of the heartless world—to even the most elevated and intellectual of God's creatures, had set its seal on Ernest Grahame; and the contumely and slight ever consequent was his portion.

But young Grahame was not one to pine and murmur at his lot; nor was he one to submit to a morbid sentimentality, and let its undermining influence sap away his very life. He resolved to seek some other land—some country where talent and nobility of spirit would be appreciated, and true worth as well as wealth be the criterion by which man should be judged and assisted.

Gathering up his little all, proud Ernest Grahame, with scarcely one natural regret at leaving England, save that it was his native land and the home of her he loved, embarked on board a ship, to go—he knew not, cared not whither, save that it bore him away from the shores of old Albion.

Many a long and weary, weary day passed on the dark blue ocean, and Ernest, in a sort of lethargic insensibility, thought not of the future, cared not for what fate held in reserve for him; he only thought of the past—that past which had been so fair in appearance and bitter in reality, to him and the young creature who seemed a part of his very existence.

It was a lovely Italian day when the bark entered a small seaport town in Italy, and cast anchor. Mechanically Ernest left the ship and strayed into the villa. His luggage followed him, and he took lodgings that night in a mean hostel near the shore. The next day he proceeded to Florence, which lay some leagues beyond; and just as the last mellow beams of the setting sun was glistening the spires and domes of the beautiful city, the unknown and poor artist first entered its peerless streets.

Ernest Grahame took apartments in a humble part of the city at first; but gradually, as his fine talents became noised abroad, the obscure painter became more ambitious. He engaged a beautiful studio in one of the finest streets; he labored assiduously, night and day, to become yet more proficient and distinguished in his art; and though many a line of care and thought wrinkled his glorious brow, success and a new ambition gave him, if possible, a yet more noble and manly appearance.

He was known no longer as Ernest Grahame; he had cast off all old titles and affections save one, and he resolved to keep no souvenir of former times. As Clarence Lyndon, the talented and accomplished artist, he found the full tide of prosperity setting in upon him, and he resisted not its impulse.

"Circumstances are the making of some men;" how true, how true did it seem so in this case!

When Ernest first entered Florence he had, by some casual circumstance which seemed trivial to him at the time, rendered great assistance to a young and somewhat dissipated nobleman of the city. Lord Alberto Camacci was not one to forget a favor done him; and with all the generosity of a noble heart true to all the good impulses of nature, he had well requited the debt of gratitude he owed to Ernest. He spoke favorably to all the aristocracy of his native city concerning the talents and versatility of young Grahame; he assisted him in a kind, inoffensive way, from his own well-filled purse; and from that time henceforth the worldly prospects of poor Grahame grew brighter and fairer.

His studio became the resort of all Florence. *Connoisseurs* and *amateurs*, young and old, affluent and poor, patrician and plebeian, alike visited the rooms of the elegant and gentlemanly Lyndon, and the same consideration was shown to all. Paintings of rare beauty and exquisite design decorated the walls; graceful statuary and costly mouldings filled the niches; while many a gorgeous and magnificent work of art embellished the splendid apartments.

Lord Alberto became the bosom friend of Clarence Lyndon; and the refined manners and noble spirit of the artist exerted a pure and good influence upon the young nobleman. His course of life became more chaste and pure; his morals, which had been somewhat contaminated by contact with the dissolute and vicious, assumed a better tone; and he blessed the day he first met with Ernest Grahame.

In turn, Camacci introduced his friend Lyndon to the *clite* of fair Florence. Clarence "took" well; all his sayings were accounted as witty, and repeated as such; his refined and accomplished bearing in society made a deep impression on the

hearts of the lovely dames; he was courted and fêted beyond measure; and Signor Camacci had the happiness of seeing his *protegee*, the young English artist, exceedingly popular!

CHAPTER VI.

At a brilliant ball given at the palazzo of the English ambassador at Florence, Clarence Lyndon first met the giddy and fascinating Lilliore de Guodini. All the emotions of his heart seemed blended together, as he concentrated them in ardent admiration of the fair though coquettish girl; and, although his own heart reproached him for his inconstancy, he could hardly absent himself a moment from the side of the charming and beautiful maiden.

It is strange how those of strong minds, high aspirations, and loftiness of intellect, will sometimes be fascinated by a volatile coquette, or a gay and light-hearted girl. Ernest could hardly comprehend the power she exercised over him, himself; but so engrossed was he in her varied charms, so bewitched (if we may thus express it) was he by her manner, her nameless and piquant brilliancy, that to him she seemed not only the "Cythenea of an hour," but a Siren to whose rippling and melodious tones he could listen forever.

Lilliore saw her conquest, and triumphed in it. The beauty and gallantry of young Lyndon was the theme of every tongue; and, to be able to captivate the heart and enlist the feelings of so lofty and noble a personage, seemed to her young and giddy heart the height of pleasure.

The charming Signora de Guodini was, at this time, the reigning belle of Florence; and, perhaps, also to Ernest, the same feelings which influenced Lilliore might have been at work in his heart; he might have gloried that he had made a conquest of the capricious beauty, while Lilliore might have exulted that she had captivated the handsome though somewhat ambitious artist.

Lilliore was charming and beautiful; the brunette and the blonde mingled together to perfection in her exterior charms, while the winning grace of her mien made a yet deeper impression on the heart of the isolated and lonely Lyndon. She had smiles for the silent and diffident, badinage for the gay, silence for the noble and elevated, poetry for the poetic, prose for the monotonous and wearisome, and the eloquence of conscious loveliness for all. It was not strange that the form of gentle Agnes Percival was erased temporarily from the susceptible heart of Ernest, when we contemplate all the wondrous grace of fair Lilliore de Guodini!

Night after night he met her in the crowded *saloon*, or the quiet drawing-room, where she was

the "cynosure of all eyes;" and at each meeting the chains of fascination which the sprightly girl had thrown around him, seemed yet more closely riveted. She always met him with a frank, affable manner, a gay word, or a naive and piquant remark, and sometimes with the *nonchalance* of a confirmed coquette; and yet Lyndon was neither disgusted or displeased at what would have been either folly or superciliousness in another; but would only smile the more on the thoughtless maiden, and seem the more absorbed in her many graces of person.

But Ernest could not entirely forget Agnes, although Lilliore was now the most in his thoughts. In the solitude of his own chamber—in the silent watches of the midnight, when the pale starlight bathed his soul in its holy and celestial radiance—in his studio, communing with the works his own genius had wrought—the pure and mild spirit of the gentle Agnes would visit him, sometimes murmuring reproachful words to his ear, or anon whispering of the eternal and sanctified love she bore him.

And often—how often!—when sleep closed his heavy eyelids did her graceful and spiritual form appear by his bedside, and soothe his weary heart by many a fond, endearing word, or invoke blessings, with clasped hands and eyes raised meekly upward, upon the head of him she so loved; and ever after such sweet dreams would Ernest arise from his couch to go forth into the cold world, with more of holy happiness and fortitude of soul than visions of mere worldly prosperity could give.

It was not after such reflections and such dreams that he could be charmed by the fair Lilliore; but it was when wearied by the monotonous events of the day, exhausted by his assiduity to his easel, and disgusted by the heartless follies and unfeeling arrogance of the world, he turned to Lilliore for relief from his undisguised contempt of all human things.

They met; they parted; they met again; and after every such meeting did each await impatiently the time for another interview, although it were in the crowded rooms of affluence and fashion.

CHAPTER VII.

AND where was Agnes Percival all this time—while the vacillating Ernest was half bending his knee at the shrine of Lilliore de Guodini?

In the mansion of the kind and fatherly Lord Paolo she had made her home; and, while the daughter of Signor de Guodini attended the gay *fete* or the brilliant festival, Agnes would sit by his side for hours in the grand old library, and read in her soft and pensive voice many a page of useful and entertaining love.

Thus week succeeded week, and months followed. The summer was nearly over, yet the soft breezes of the "beautiful clime" still fanned the pallid cheek of sweet Agnes. She had begun to think of returning to England, as her mother often urged her to in the missives which Agnes constantly received from her, when she was one day deeply surprised and pained by a conference with her kind-old friend, Lord Paolo de Guodini.

Signor Alberto Camacci had ever been a welcome guest at de Guodini's. The sprightliness of his manners, the grace and refinement of his deportment, and the extraordinary beauty of his person, procured him instant access to the house of Lord Paolo; while the many graces of his mind, and the unmistakeable genius with which he was endowed, rendered him a peculiarly agreeable companion to the stately yet intellectual old nobleman.

Perhaps there was another charm which attracted Camacci to the palazzo of Lord Paolo, than the long conversation which invariably occurred when he visited the mansion. Lilliore had not then made her debut in fashionable society; and, as a matter of course, many of the coquettish and heartless habits which she had since learned, she was then entirely free from. She was a gentle being, all heart and all soul; a creature with whom good impulses took the place of sober thought; and Camacci often thought as he gazed with envious admiration on the gentle girl, that there was not another maiden in all Florence whom he would as soon take to his arms as a bride, as Lilliore de Guodini.

And Lilliore—sweet Lilliore—would tremble in his presence, and sometimes look abashed and frightened when he addressed her with his manly voice; or anon, be more than usually gay—laugh with her soft, childish voice, or sing some gleeful melody, accompanied by the rich voice of Alberto, or the harmonious strains of her lute.

In this manner the time glided swiftly away. Lord Alberto never breathed a syllable to either Signor de Guodini or his daughter of his feelings toward her; but the old nobleman was not slow to perceive the mutual interest felt in each other: and happy indeed was his heart at the thought, that the affection of his darling Lilliore toward one every worthy of it, was reciprocated. It was understood throughout all Florence that an engagement existed between them; but as yet it was only a tacit one.

It was about this time that Agnes Percival arrived in Florence, and that Lilliore made her debut in the fashionable world of the city. The charm of society, gilded and painted as it was, had an inexpressible fascination to the heart of the young Lilliore; and from this time henceforth she seemed scarcely contented in the quiet of

home, or happy in what had formerly been her greatest pleasure—in attending to her father's wants and anticipating his slightest wish; but in the brilliant hall, or the gay saloon all the elasticity of her buoyant spirits resumed their natural tone, and the spirited creature charmed and ravished all hearts by the naive wit which flowed from her tongue.

But to the heart of Alberto this change in Lilliore was far from agreeable. He had loved her for her quiet and gentle manner; for her tender and confiding heart; and for her guileless and affable bearing. But to see her the courted and admired belle, the proud and coquetted beauty, to whom all might bow alike and offer their homage and attentions, galled his sensitive spirit. He expostulated with her—but in vain; a new and glittering vista of pleasure was opened to the dazzled vision of the light-hearted girl, and she was not to be turned away from its golden gates; and with the first bitter word which had ever trembled on her lips, she bade him not to attempt to control her actions. The heart of Camacci was deeply wounded; and with a mournful smile on his handsome face, and a tremulous word of caution on his tongue, he turned from the presence of the already repentant Lilliore.

For a time life had no charms for him; he visited no places of amusement, he frequented not the drawing-rooms of opulence, where his presence was ever welcome; but he left fair Florence for a season, filled with a morbid contempt of all human affections. When he returned, the first place whither he turned his footsteps was to the palazzo of Signor de Guodini, for whom he felt almost the reverence due to a parent.

It was then and there, in the library with Lord Paolo, that he first met with fair Agnes Percival. Spell-bound, he gazed at that sweet and pensive face like one in a dream; nor was he aroused until the soft and liquid tones of her voice first fell upon his ear. Then did his admiration of Agnes find words, and he exerted himself to draw forth the modest and retiring girl.

Many a long and delicious hour passed in that magnificent study, and Camacci found himself perfectly entranced by the matchless yet unconscious loveliness of Agnes, and the deep, entertaining love of her mind. He forgot all his misanthropy, all his suffering in the graceful mien and accomplishments of Miss Percival; and not till a late hour did he leave the library of Lord Paolo.

As he passed out of the grand hall of the mansion he met the graceful Lilliore just returning from a *route* given at the palazzo of the Due de F—. There was no reserve in that meeting; they cordially grasped each other's hands, and kindly words hovered on their lips.

Each returning day found Lord Alberto by the side of Agnes Percival, at the house of de Guodini, lingering near her, or listening to her low and gentle accents, in a manner which denoted his entire fascination. Gradually his words and deportment grew warmer, and his bearing toward her yet more constant and devoted; but Agnes was guileless and unsuspecting, and she did not once imagine that the proud Camacci felt for her more than a friendly attachment. True, she could see that his very being seemed to hang upon her breath, that he watched with intense eagerness each movement she made; but so devoted was she in her love for Ernest, so true to even the shadow of inconstancy or waywardness, that her pure mind could hardly suspect that she had inspired in another's heart the same emotions which Ernest experienced.

How grieved and how pained then was Agnes, when the kind old Lord Paolo, to whom Alberto had confided his love for her, and urged to forward his suit with the beautiful girl, informed her of the love of Camacci, and the desire of Alberto that they should be united! Stunned by the terrible tidings, and the ingratitude with which Camacci would inevitably regard her inexplicable conduct, in refusing the hand offered her in so considerate a manner, the poor girl could only gasp, "I will see him myself, my Lord!" and sink fainting upon a sofa near at hand.

Firmly yet kindly, did poor Agnes reject the proffered hand and heart of Alberto Camacci. She pleaded to him of a former attachment, of her love for another, and the impossibility of her bestowing her heart upon him, and he no longer urged her to be his. Sad indeed was his heart; but when he left the presence of the sobbing Agnes Percival he was a better, if not a happier man.

No word had been breathed to others of the unfortunate attachment of Alberto for Agnes; only those three persons so united together in friendship's holy tie, knew of the affection of Camacci for her: and for once the rejection of the hand of a suitor had not been bruited abroad.

After this Agnes often met him; but he regarded her only in the light of a very dear friend, Agnes did not shun his company; she was confident of her own purity and firmness in her devotion to the memory of the unforgotten Ernest.

CHAPTER VIII.

LILLIORE had been quite ill for several days; and as the incoherent words and disjointed sentences fell from the lips of the sufferer, Agnes, who had watched over her with all a sister's tenderness and devotion, gleaned the fact that

the gay heart which beat within that fair bosom throbbled Alberto Camacci!

It was even so! Although none might suspect that the light heart of the beauteous girl was blighted or broken, a deep sorrow had fallen on her young spirit, caused by her own folly and waywardness; and when Alberto had bidden her adieu, as she thought *forever* on that eventful night, it seemed to her as if her heart would break beneath its weight of untold agony!

But Lilliore was proud as well as merry. She resolved to throw herself still more into society, to dissipate her sorrow. She plunged headlong into its vortex, little dreaming how dangerous were the deceitful waters; and while the laugh, and the song, and the jest trembled on her red lips, the heart of poor Lilliore was breaking!

When Lilliore recovered from her serious illness, the bonds of love were thrown yet closer around her and Agnes—for suffering seeks for sympathy in the hearts of those who know of sorrow. They confided everything in each other; Agnes, her love for Ernest, and its unhappy consequences—Lilliore, her affection for Camacci, and her misery caused by her own folly and obstinacy. Lilliore went not into society as much as formerly; her weakness had been opened to her eyes by the kindness of Agnes, and blessing the hand which tore away the tinselled veil from the world, she gradually drew herself away from her former haunts, and became happier in the quiet of hallowed home, and the society of Agnes and her father.

It was then that Lilliore felt a desire to visit the studio of Clarence Lyndon, her former admirer; for she yearned to see the works of art from his pencil so much noised abroad, and so much admired. She at length procured the consent of Agnes to accompany her; and one delicious afternoon, when the cool and spicy breezes of the clime of Italia went sighing over the city, the two young girls passed down the long and shady Strada wherein was the studio of young Lyndon, and paused before the doors to the rooms of the English artist.

The first thing on which the eyes of Agnes rested, when she entered the magnificent studio, was the picture of a beautiful Greek girl, whose cheek was tinted by the first blush of womanhood in an attitude of prayer, her large blue eyes raised meekly heavenward, and the small hands clasped upon the breast. Agnes started. She had certainly seen that picture before—or its very counterpart—in the apartment of Ernest Grahme in London! The eyes of Lilliore followed those of Agnes', and a faint cry of astonishment broke from her lips.

"It is a picture of yourself, dear Agnes!" she whispered, as she pointed to the portrait which

seemed beaming with a loveliness not of this earth, a beauty almost divine.

Long and earnestly did those two fair beings gaze at that sweet picture, and when Agnes turned her eyes away they fell upon the form of one but too well remembered, who stood in a dreamy and unconscious attitude, gazing intently with his lustrous eyes on the form of her he loved!

"Agnes!" "Ernest!"

They were folded in each other's arms, while the astonished yet happy Lilliore gazed wonderingly on the meeting of Ernest Grahame and Agnes Percival!

When that rapturing embrace was over, mutual explanations followed, and Ernest could scarcely refrain from clasping that beloved being again and again to his heart, as she murmured many a soft, endearing word in his listening ear.

But even this happiness could not always last; and Ernest, pressing one warm kiss on the yielding lips of Agnes, and bestowing a kind word on the fair Lilliore, parted with them at the mansion of Lord Paolo.

How happy now were those two young and dreaming lovers! They met often at the palazzo of Signor de Guodini, and many a long and ecstatic hour passed in each other's society; while Alberto, who had returned to his first love, the now happy and lovely Lilliore, spent his time principally in the company of his former love and her father.

Time passed on, and the happy household of Lord Paolo as yet had experienced no change—although the union of Alberto and Lilliore was soon to take place. Lord Paolo was now in a state of enjoyment indeed; and as the trembling Agnes pleaded to him, one morning on her bended knee, to attempt to influence her father in favor of the suit of Ernest, he gladly and readily consented.

Grahame was now rich—very rich; for, added to his own large fortune acquired in Florence, was that of his brother, who had died in the Indies, and left to his only surviving kinsman the whole of his princely and almost boundless wealth.

Lord Paolo wrote at once to Sir Mordaunt favoring the suit of Grahame, and asking of the friend of his youth the permission for sweet Agnes, whom he loved as a daughter, to unite herself with one every way worthy of her—a young Englishman of great wealth, rare accomplishments, and good family, then staying in Florence. The name of the gentleman, he wrote, was *Clarence Lyndon*, and he trusted that Sir Mordaunt would give his consent without hesitation, for in every respect it was a desirable alliance.

And Lord Percival did give his consent; trusting implicitly in the good judgment of de Guodini to secure a good husband for his beloved child. Agnes and Ernest smiled when Lord Paolo read to them the letter of her father; yet Agnes trembled and almost wept, for she dreaded to impart the tidings to him that she was to be united to the detested Ernest Grahame. But Ernest soon soothed her troubled heart by whispering loving words to her; and Agnes wept in the excess of her joy upon the bosom of Ernest.

CHAPTER IX.

It was a gala night in fair Florence; and from the palazzo of Lord Paolo de Guodini streamed a flood of gorgeous and blazing light; while within those luminous halls a thousand gay and joyous hearts beat time to the quick gushes of harmony which echoed through the beautiful mansion. There was a flashing of jewels, soft voices floated upon the perfumed air, and in the subdued yet glowing brilliance many a fair form glided along, scarcely seeming to touch the floor so ethereal were the light and graceful figures!

It was the wedding night of Alberto and Lilliore, and Ernest and Agnes; and all the elite and noblesse of Florence had assembled to grace the bridal festival, whose eclat and pomp was the theme of every tongue.

Alberto Camacci and Lilliore de Guodini were united in the holy and hallowed bond of matrimony; and as the fervent responses to the holy words of the aged priest trembled on their lips, they turned away to give place to the noble and handsome Ernest Grahame and his fair bride, the trembling and beautiful Agnes Percival.

When the company had departed, and the festival was over, how happy were those two young and devoted beings! And though the blushing Agnes could hardly speak so great was her happiness, a world of sweet emotions in the bosom of Ernest found vent in words. "My own—my own!" he murmured, and the long and fervent embrace which followed was replete with unutterable bliss to the heart of each.

A few weeks after the marriage of Ernest and Agnes—amid the tears of the two young brides, and the adieu of Alberto and Lord Paolo, Ernest departed for his native land with his sweet wife. It was with deep regret that those two loving ones left the fair city of Florence; for to them it was linked with many pleasant and happy memories, and many endearing associations. But business matters required the presence of Ernest in London; and Agnes yearned to see again her beloved parents.

The yellow leaves of autumn had just begun to strew the ground, and the chilly wind sighed

mournfully among the huge trees, as an emblazoned coach rolled up the graveled avenue to the princely mansion of Lord Percival. Ernest and Agnes Grahame alighted from it; and passing up the marble steps, soon stood in the lofty entrance room of Percival Hall.

Sir Mordaunt and Lady Emilia met Agnes on the threshold; and after an affectionate embrace the nobleman turned to greet the husband of his child. The hand of Lord Percival was extended cordially, and a suavitous smile played upon his countenance as he welcomed the *rich* Ernest Grahame to the home of Agnes. Yet no word was spoken of the past—he never referred to the time he had rejected Ernest as a husband for his daughter because he was poor and unknown; but he ever treated him with esteem and affection, in which a tinge of natural pride was apparent.

For a time Ernest made his home in the house of Lord Percival; but at length the mansion which was razed to the ground on Grahame Manor was

re-built by him; the fields were once more cultivated and tilled; and in a few years a more lovely or delightful place could not be found in all England, than the broad domain which had belonged to Ernest's ancestors, and on which he had erected a stately and splendid mansion.

He also purchased a beautiful villa in the suburbs of Florence, on the green banks of the silvery Arno, and near the residence of his friend Camacci; and there, every year, he and Agnes sojourned to breathe the fresh, dewy air of that fair clime, and to sit under that azure sky so renowned in song and story.

Agnes and Lilliore were now as of yore bosom friends, as were there happy husbands, Ernest and Alberto; and though Agnes saw how supremely happy was the wife of Camacci, she never regretted that she had adhered to her first pure love, and thereby reaped the reward of TRUE LOVE'S DEVOTION!

CHOOSING A HUSBAND.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"AND so Mary Hinton is engaged to be married?"

The speaker would have been very lovely, if a somewhat scornful expression had not marred her beauty. She was about nineteen, and attired in the costliest style. Her remark was addressed to a young lady about her own age, on whom she was making a morning call.

"Whom to?" said her friend.

"Oh! to some nobody, as might have been expected. His name is James Brown. Horribly plebeian, is it not? And, worse than all, he is a mechanic."

"I don't see that his business is a very serious objection, provided it furnishes him a sufficient income. The great point in a husband, I should think, would be moral habits, industry, and tastes suitable to your own. As for Mary's beau being a mechanic, why so was Franklin, and so was Roger Sherman."

"Pshaw! You're always thinking of men one reads of in books; tiresome people, I have no doubt, they all are, though people do call them great. But we are not talking of such. For my part I will marry no one but a gentleman, a professional man, or, at least, a merchant. But I'm not much surprised at Mary Hinton's choice, after all; for her father was only a miller, when he first came here, rich as he is now."

Not long after this the fair visitor took her leave. Within six months the subject of her gossip, pretty Mary Hinton, was married, and became Mrs. James Brown. She and Isabel Graham had been acknowledged, by common consent, the two belles of our village; and when Mary married a house-carpenter, thriving though he was, Isabel was not the only one to declare she had thrown herself away. But Mary knew better. She had selected her husband out of nearly a score of admirers, passing by several who were richer, to say nothing of being better looking; but James was a dutiful son, had a cultivated mind, and possessed firm religious principles. Marriage is a solemn affair, and so Mary felt it; and when she came to choose a partner for life, she selected one who could be her counsellor and friend, rather than one who could merely amuse an idle hour. With her "worth made the man." She cared no more, therefore, for the condolences of pretended friends like

Isabel, on her unfortunate preference, than for the idle wind.

Mary had been married scarcely a year when Isabel was led to the altar. The choice of the latter fell on Harry Stanley, an only son, and the inheritor of a considerable fortune. He was altogether the handsomest young man in the village. His ancestors, for at least three generations, had lived on their money, having owned several of the finest farms in the neighborhood. Harry had been a spoilt child, and was now a selfish man. But of all this Isabel saw nothing. She looked only at the wealth, beauty, and fine connexions of her lover. The day she was married, she thought more of her being the envy of half her acquaintance, than of the solemn duties she was so lightly assuming.

Had she known, however, that Harry had been refused, two years before, by Mary Hinton, on account of his dissolute life, she would not have been so self-satisfied. But her "splendid match," as she called it, completely turned her head. She passed Mary in the street without a recognition, being now too haughty to have a mechanic's wife on her visiting list. Other old friends she treated in the same way.

Both of our village belles were now married. People speculated, according to their several tastes, on the choice each had made. The older and more judicious generally pronounced in favor of Mary's selection; but the young and thoughtless, with but few exceptions, considered Isabel the more fortunate of the two.

When Mrs. Stanley had been married about a year, however, there began to be a rumor that her husband neglected her. He was known to be absent, for weeks at a time, without any ostensible cause; and persons in the habit of visiting the city, said they met him there. He was generally seen at theatres and taverns, and was thought to frequent more disreputable places. It was ever whispered, though the rumor could not be traced that he played at gambling-houses, drank to excess, and was fast dissipating his fortune.

The latter report even came out in a more authentic shape. First one, and then another of the Stanley farms were mortgaged, and finally sold, yet the demand for money did not stop. Harry's establishment, meantime, fell off materially in splendor. The Stanley carriage, once the

wonder of the village, had grown tarnished and shabby; but no attempt was made to re-place it. The once shining livery was faded, but the coachman received no new suit. Other unmistakable signs of a reduced scale of expenditure, on the part of the Stanleys, were noticed, and commented on. Isabel, it was remarked, no longer went out, and was always in low spirits: indeed she was just the one to feel acutely this decline in fortune.

Meantime Mary's prospects increased as fast as those of her old acquaintance declined. Her husband was an excellent workman, a man of great energy, and not without friends. By rigidly confining his expenditures within his means, he gradually increased the small capital with which he began life, until finally he not only had enough for the purposes of an enlarged business, but for profitable investment elsewhere. He now took contracts for building, bought vacant lots, and erected, on his own account, dwellings for sale or rent. As he was a careful thinker his speculations were always judicious; and he soon began to be looked upon as a rising man. In his evenings he studied architecture, and became in time such an adept, that, when a new town hall was to be built, the plan was left entirely to him. He also erected, for the congregation of which he was a member, a pretty little gothic church, which the bishop, at the next visitation, declared "the best specimen of medieval architecture in the diocese." This success was attended of course by an enlarged scale of expenditure; and the Browns lived as well now as almost anybody in the place.

Nor was this all. Mary's tastes, and those of her husband were sympathetic; and they enjoyed, therefore, a measure of bliss rarely rivalled. Such a thing as a quarrel, it was said, had never taken place between them. Their children were handsome, healthy, well-behaved, and unusually intelligent. The home of Mary was, indeed, a Paradise on earth. "I was happy at my father's house," she was wont to say, "but, oh! how immeasurably happier I am now."

Let us now turn to Isabel. Bad as report made her husband it did not tell half the truth. Stanley now spent three-fourths of his time in the city, and during the other fourth, when he was at home, was morose to the last degree. He rarely went out in the village, but remained shut up in his house, where his chief amusement consisted in drinking brandy to intoxication. Every day, long before nightfall, he became inebriated. Sometimes, in his drunken fits, he would beat his wife, the once haughty and beautiful Isabel; and she, too proud to confess her shame to the world, was compelled to endure this ill-treatment in silence.

Farm after farm continued to melt away. Every fall, when Stanley went to the city, he carried the price of many a broad acre with him: every summer, when he returned, he came back with empty pockets, cursing his ill-luck. At last nothing was left but the old mansion in the village, and a solitary bit of meadow land on the margin of the river. And now poverty, in its most grinding shape, fell upon Isabel. Her husband was away, and had left her destitute of money: she had obtained credit at the stores as long as the tradesmen would trust her; but at last this resource failed, and one bitter winter morning she was left, without food for herself or her children.

The servants had long since departed, except a faithful old negro woman, who, in this extremity, went to a neighbor, secretly, to beg. That neighbor happened to be Mrs. Brown. Ever since Isabel refused to recognize her old friend, there had been no intercourse between the families, and thus, although Mary now lived in a handsome mansion, close to the Stanleys, she knew little, except by rumor, of her former rival. She was shocked inexpressibly when she learned the destitution of Isabel, but aware of the pride of her old schoolmate, she did not venture to go in person to relieve her: she contented herself with giving the old negro servant as much provision as she wished, telling her to come for more when that was gone.

For several weeks Mary continued secretly to support the Stanleys. At last, one tempestuous morning, the post-master's boy was seen to knock at the door of the Stanleys, as if the bearer of important intelligence; and, soon after he left, shriek after shriek was heard rising from the house. In this emergency Mary, overlooking all considerations of etiquette, rushed into her neighbor's, where a scene of unparalleled misery met her sight.

Mrs. Stanley was on the floor in violent convulsions, with her children weeping around her. The old negro woman knelt at the feet of her mistress, nearly paralyzed with terror, wringing her hands, but offering to do nothing. A letter lay near Isabel, and this Mary took up, as likely to afford the only clue to this terrible and fatal spectacle.

"Yes, dat's it, Missus' Brown," said the old negro servant. "It all come of dat wicked letter. Ole Hannah can't read, or she know, afore dis, what de matter. Spose it something about massa, for missus only open de letter, when she scream out his name, and den fall in convulsions. De Lord bless us, what we do?"

The suspicions of the faithful servant proved correct. On perusing the letter, Mrs. Brown found—horrible to relate—that Mr. Stanley,

two days before, after losing his last cent at a gambling-table, had committed suicide.

We hasten to the end of this "owre true tale." Mrs. Stanley never recovered from the shock which her pride suffered in being the wife of a suicide. She died the next day.

Her children were adopted by their relatives, and a few friends who commiserated their helpless condition. Mrs. Brown herself took the youngest, an infant of only six months old.

Mr. Brown is now one of the wealthiest real-

estate owners in his neighborhood. Several of the Stanley farms have come into his possession by purchase, and it is intention to give one to the poor orphan his wife has adopted.

In one of the most eloquent members of the present Congress, the once despised mechanic may be recognized. His career shows how much more valuable sterling worth is than empty show, a fact all should remember in CHOOSING A HUSBAND.

CRAZY ELLEN.

BY MRS. JULIA C. R. DORR.

I HAD received a cordial invitation from the parents of Lizzie Elliot, to spend a few weeks with her in her pleasant home. I had not seen her since the day after examination, when we parted six months previous, and was by no means unwilling to comply with their request. One day's ride brought me to the quiet village where she resided; and when the panting steeds halted before a small white cottage, with a porch in front, extending the whole length of the building, and enclosed on either end with lattice work, over which a running rose and honeysuckle had been trained, both of which were in full bloom; while the thick shrubbery in the yard, and the tall trees whose branches hung droopingly over it, gave the little dwelling the appearance of a bird's-nest half-hidden by the green foliage, I thought I had never seen a lovelier spot. Sure enough it was a "bird's-nest," and there was the "bird" that dwelt in "the sheltering nest," in the shape of my sweet Lizzie, standing in the porch, and clapping her little hands as the long-looked-for vehicle drew up at the door.

The evening passed rapidly away, and at an early hour I retired fatigued with the day's journey. The next morning I arose refreshed, and quite ready to fall in with any or all of Lizzie's plans for amusement. We returned about sunset from a long ramble; and somewhat tired I threw myself upon a sofa, and commenced carelessly touching the strings of Lizzie's guitar; but soon started to my feet again as the tones of a voice singularly wild, yet clear and sweet, arose apparently from the shrubbery a short distance from the window.

"Oh! it is poor, Crazy Ellen," said little Alice, running to the door, "there she sits under that big tree in the corner. May I go and carry her some of these cherries, mamma?" And receiving the desired permission, the little sprite darted away on her errand of kindness. With my

curiosity strongly excited, I stepped out into the porch, in order to obtain a better view of the songstress.

She was a woman of apparently about middle age—but owing to the singularity of her general appearance, it was difficult to decide the question. Rather below than above the average height of woman, her figure was exquisitely proportioned, and every quick, wild motion was grace itself. Her hair, which was rich brown, had been cut off, and now clustered in short, glossy curls all over her head and around her face, giving it a child-like expression, that contrasted strangely with the deathly pallor of her cheek, and the deep, burning lustre of her large, restless eyes. She had thrown herself upon the grass, and was singing an air now soft and plaintive, and so replete with mournful tenderness, that you might have deemed it the last sad wail of a breaking heart; and anon, with a startling transition it would grow joyous as a wild-bird's note, and come gushing from her lips as if she were the very personification of mirth and gladness. Perceiving that she was observed she sprang suddenly to her feet, and was out of sight in an instant.

"Oh! mamma, and Sister Lizzie, and you too, Miss Jessie, see what a queer basket poor Ellen gave me when I offered her the cherries," said Alice, tripping into the parlor, her bright face beaming with happiness, "I suppose she made it herself."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Elliot, "that is one of her favorite occupations. You can find them just commenced—half-finished, and completed in all her haunts, and scattered through the forest wherever she has wandered." It is skilfully woven too," she added, as she took the curiously wrought fabric in her hand, "and she has displayed a good deal of ingenuity in its construction. You perceive it is formed of the slender

branches of the willow and of bark intricately woven together." Dropping her head she gazed long as if lost in thought upon the basket, then with a deep and long-drawn sigh she murmured, half unconsciously, "poor Ellen! Poor, poor Ellen!"

"She is a resident of your village then," I remarked; "do you know anything of her history, Lizzie? I cannot help fancying that there is a thread of romance running through her web of destiny."

"Where will you find one human being in whose history there is *not* some tale of romance? But there is a long story connected with poor Ellen, as we always call her. I remember hearing something of it when I was a little girl. Mother, you promised me a long time ago that you would tell me all the particulars. Will you do so now? I know Jessie would like to hear the story. Come, let me draw this large chair out in the porch, and little Ally will bring the foot-stool. Will you tell us the tale now, mother dear?"

Mrs. Elliot assented, and we were soon all comfortably arranged, Mrs. Elliot in the arm-chair, Lizzie and I with our work, and Alice seated at her mother's feet, with her curly pate resting on her knee.

"I do not profess to be much of a story-teller, my children," Mrs. Elliot commenced. "But——"

"Why, mamma," interrupted Ally, "I think you tell the prettiest stories of anybody." Bidding her be quiet, and smiling at the childish compliment, her mother proceeded—

"But if you wish to hear poor Ellen's history, I will endeavor to re-call the events as they occurred, and relate them to you as systematically as possible. I have known Ellen Howard from her infancy. Death had often entered the parsonage, and of all those whose footsteps were wont to echo through the halls, none remained save one old minister and his maiden sister. When the news came that William—the eldest son—who was a sailor, the pride and delight of his father's heart, had been shipwrecked in the Mediterranean, and that his widow and child were in New York, Mr. Howard, in spite of his years and infirmities, started immediately in pursuit of them. Prayers and blessings followed him; and when, after a few weeks, he returned, bringing with him a lovely little girl about two years old, (the young mother had joined her husband in the spirit land) there was not a single heart in the whole parish, that did not rejoice that the old man had again found 'something to love—something to cling to—something to clasp affection's tendrils round.'

"A sweeter child than Ellen Howard never gladdened any hearthstone, and the orphan girl was soon the pet and plaything of the whole

village. Her grandfather seemed to grow young again, now that the sound of merry voices and ringing laughter was heard as of yore in his dwelling; and as he joined in the little one's gambols, tossing her high in the air until she screamed aloud, half in delight and half in terror, or listened to her artless prattling, he half forgot that, one by one, he had laid all of his own children to sleep by their mother's side—all save one, and he—'he lay where pearls lie deep.'

"The years rolled on apace, and when the flowers of seventeen summers had sprang up in her pathway, Ellen Howard was by far the loveliest girl in the whole parish. She is now only the wreck of what she then was, but even yet there are traces left of the grace and beauty so lavishly bestowed upon her.

"Everybody loved her—she was so glad-hearted and affectionate—so pure-minded and confiding, and so gay and sprightly withal that no one could help loving her; not even old Dame Beewell, who had won for herself an unenviable notoriety by her fault-finding propensities, and who had never before been known to speak a kind word of any one.

"And if everybody loved, there was one who seemed to worship her. Edgar Stanley was the 'only son of his mother, and she a widow,' and they resided in that elegant mansion across the river. You can see it if you stand here, Jessie. There, look between that white rose-bush and the linden tree, and you can see the chimneys and part of the building—the rest is hidden by the trees.

"Edgar had played a brother's part in all her childish pleasures and pursuits, and had been her champion in all her childish difficulties. He left the village to complete his studies, and when he returned he found the little fairy from whom he had parted four years previous, transformed into a beautiful being, possessing all the purest and loveliest traits of woman's character, while she retained all the artlessness and simplicity of a child, and his heart yielded to the influences of a still stronger attachment.

"With all the characteristic ardor of his temperament he sought to win her love. The attempt was not a vain one, and, ere many months had passed, it was well known throughout the village that Ellen Howard was the affianced bride of Edgar Stanley.

"It was one of those very rare 'matches' with which even village gossips could find no fault. Both were young, both intelligent; the friends of the parties on either side were pleased; Stanley was, in country parlance, independantly rich, and they loved each other dearly. What more was wanting? Yet there were a few who looked below the surface of things—who feared that there was

in the young lover's character a want of that firmness of principle, of that fixed adherence to the right, and of that unwavering fidelity that could alone render him a fit companion for one so gentle and confiding as our Ellen.

"Oh! Mrs. Elliot," said Ellen, as with an open letter in her hand she entered my room one bright morning, (you were a babe then, Lizzie) 'I have such good news! You have heard of my Cousin Vernon, who lives in Georgia? I have just received a letter from her, in which she speaks of her intention to spend the summer in Sunnysdale, if Uncle Howard can find a spare corner in the quiet parsonage for his stranger niece. I am so glad she is coming! I know we shall love each other.'

"The 'spare corner' was found, and in a very short time the expected guest arrived. I have many times, my children, seen those whom I regarded as beautiful; but I have never met any one who could compare favorably with Isabel Vernon. I cannot describe her. I might borrow the language of the novelist, and tell you that she was tall and surpassingly graceful—that her eyes were large, dark and eloquent—now seemingly full of 'thought and prayer,' and now flashing with a brilliancy that was almost *too dazzling*—that her brow was white and pure as marble, and the wealth of hair above it black and glossy as the raven's wing. I might tell you all this, but I can give you but a faint idea of the charm, the *witchery*, the fascinating power that dwelt in each word, look and gesture. Ellen was perfectly enraptured with her sweet Cousin Bel.

"Walks, rides, parties followed each other in quick succession, and Edgar Stanley was the constant attendant of the two fair girls. For a while Ellen's whole time and attention was devoted to her guest; but as the weeks sped away, and Isabel became domesticated in the dwelling of her uncle, she returned again in some degree to her wonted pursuits, and to those household duties that had been interrupted by her cousin's arrival, and the accompanying festivities.

"Then it was that Stanley—of course out of the merest civility to the friend of his betrothed—often accompanied the beautiful southerner upon her rambles far from the restraining presence of others, and rumor began to whisper that sometimes in the clear moonlight evenings their walks were prolonged to an unreasonably late hour.

"Affairs went on thus for some time, until every one save Ellen was convinced that Miss Vernon was stealing, and that wilfully, the heart that she well knew was pledged to another by every bond save the last one at the altar. She, poor girl, thought in her innocent confidence that it was but another proof of the love her

Edgar bore her, that *for her sake*, he should give so much of his time to a comparative stranger—and use so many endeavors to make the summer pass pleasantly to Cousin Bel!

"To do Miss Vernon justice, I do not think that at first she either wished or intended to win Stanley's affections. But she was a coquette at heart, and from her very childhood had been the recipient of unrivalled homage and admiration. She saw that Ellen was almost idolized by her friends; that with them she was the one bright, peculiar star excelling all others. She could not brook such a rival, and resolved to triumph by leading her cousin's lover captive, and showing the wondering villagers that their paragon's simple graces must yield to her superior charm. But as is often the case, she was entangled in the snare her own hands were weaving; and learned to love Stanley with as passionate and devoted a love as her cold, vain heart was capable of cherishing.

"One sultry morning, about the middle of August, the news spread like wild-fire through the village that Ellen was dangerously ill. The attack was sudden and violent; ere nightfall she was delirious, and her lips were parched and burning with the fever-thirst. For many days we hung around the couch of the gentle sufferer, bathing her hot, aching brow, and striving in vain to alleviate her anguish, and our hearts grew faint within us as we looked in each others faces and saw that they were lit up by no ray of hope.

"At last the fever left her, but she was feeble and helpless as a newly born babe, and utterly unconscious of aught that was passing around her. It seemed that her exhausted nature could never regain its wonted energy—and as we bent over her we held our very breath, trembling lest even that should be sufficient to snap the brittle thread of life.

"But where, do you ask, was Edgar Stanley during these dark hours? He called at the house each day, and never failed to inquire concerning the sufferer, and to ask if he could render any assistance; but the words fell coldly from his lips, and the eager interest of the lover was all wanting. Even before the question was answered his eye would wander round in search of the new star, whose false, beguiling beam was luring him onward.

"As for Miss Vernon herself, she kept entirely aloof from the chamber where her cousin lay—she never could endure a sick-room—her health was delicate, and her nerves so weak that the sight of suffering always overcame her!"

"It was at this crisis that one afternoon Stanley's carriage drew up before the door of the parsonage, Isabel entered it and they drove off.

Night came and they returned not. Morning dawned, and we ascertained that they had been married the evening previous, and departed for Miss Vernon's southern home.

"They had chosen their time well! Their poor victim knew not of their treachery—and had no voice to give utterance to reproaches!

"It may have been wrong, but as I stood that day listening for the faint and almost inaudible sound of Ellen's breath, I hoped that she might die, I so dreaded the hour of returning consciousness. What could be done?—how could we tell her the terrible tale?—terrible indeed to that young heart whose very life was bound up in the dream from which she must be so rudely awakened.

"But my wish was not granted. At length the blue eyes slowly opened, a faint smile lingered upon the lips, and we knew that once again we were recognized. Attempting to raise her wasted arms, that were as white as the snowy counterpane upon which they rested, she feebly murmured her grandfather's name, and the old man bowed his head upon the pillow, and sobbed aloud like a very child. Her first inquiry was for Stanley; her next for her cousin, he avoided a direct reply, by telling her that she was yet too ill to talk, and that her life depended upon her keeping perfectly quiet. But many times the next day, and the next, she repeated the question, and it was evident that the truth could be concealed but little longer. She scanned each face with an eager, anxious eye, and on the fourth day said to me, as I stood by her bedside,

"Something has happened since I have been sick, Mrs. Elliot—something very dreadful has happened. Nay, do not turn your face away, nor fear to tell me the truth. Is Edgar dead? I have been very near death myself—I have stood upon the very verge of the dark valley, and it did not look dark or dreary. I used to think it would be a terrible thing to die; but my feelings

have altered since I have lain here. Now tell me—is Edgar dead? We shall not be separated long."

"Tears were blinding me, long ere she had done speaking, and whispering that she should soon know all, I stepped into the parlor where her grandfather was sitting, told him what had occurred, and that the truth could be concealed no longer. We returned to her bedside.

"She looked up in our faces with a sweet smile, and her grandfather bent over her, kissing her pale brow, cheek, and lips, and murmuring words of fond endearment.

"'Tell me all now,' she whispered, and he took her hand in his, and told the tale slowly, gently, tenderly, even as a mother would have addressed the young being before him.

"Ellen's face was turned from us before he concluded; but she lay quiet, and I thanked God in my heart that the task was over. We had remained silent some minutes, when her grandfather rose to leave the room; but his glance fell upon Ellen's face, and a low cry of agony burst from him. I sprang forward—her eyes were open, but fixed and rayless—her cheek was like that of the dead, and no breath came from the white lips.

"We thought that the pure spirit had departed, but after some hours our efforts to revive her were successful, and the ashen hue fled from her cheek. But the light of reason never returned to those beautiful eyes.

"Health returned to her, and she now generally seems to be happy—but our hearts are even saddened when we re-call the sad story of Ellen Howard."

"What became of Stanley and his treacherous bride, Mrs. Elliot?"

"They never returned to Sunnydale. Stanley has had his reward. His wife deserted him a few years after their marriage, and in his lonely home he bitterly rues the day when, infatuated by her beauty, he led her to the altar."

HOWARD STANHOPE.

A TALE OF LIFE.

BY WELL CUNNINGHAM.

CHAPTER I.

NEAR the close of a beautiful day, in the year 18—, a large and elegant carriage containing a gentleman and lady, was slowly moving along a road that winds among the mountains of one of the western states. The country was wild and rugged, and so distinguished-looking a travelling party, perhaps, had never before passed through this rude and sparsely settled district. The occupants of the carriage were Colonel Denham, a wealthy, aristocratic old gentleman of Washington city, and his accomplished daughter—an exquisitely beautiful creature of seventeen summers. Ten months of travel in the Mississippi valley had restored health and vigor to the enfeebled frame of the city-bred old gentleman—and he was now returning to his home—to which his heart clung with the fondness of many tender, though melancholy associations. It was there he had known life's beginning, its energy, and its toils. There he had first learned to feel the noble impulses of generous manhood—to love a bright, pure being who had shone on his heart as sunshine on the young grass of spring—but the sunshine was gone, and the grass was withering. His life-mate had died one little year from their bridal morn, leaving him a beautiful babe to solace his loneliness—which he reared with the most tender solicitude, but his heart was buried in the grave of his early love. He was, at the moment of his introduction to the reader, indulging in a revery, half-pleasing, half-mournful, when the sudden halting of the vehicle put an end to his reflections. Looking up he met the eyes of his affectionate child resting confidently on his somewhat grave and melancholy countenance. "What detains us, my little pet?" said he, kindly, but before she had time to reply the ebony-hued coachman made his appearance at the window, and stated that he only paused to give his horses a moment's rest before undertaking to climb the steep hill before them. "Quite right, George," said his master. "It has been often said that 'a merciful man is merciful to his beast,' and you are an example of the truth of the remark. By-the-bye, you may let me out—I shall walk up the hill."

George, much complimented by his master's allusion to his merciful disposition, with a pleased

smile opened the door, and having assisted him to alight, re-adjusted the steps, closed the door, and mounting his box, drove on.

Isabel Denham was now the sole occupant of the carriage as it wound its way up the eminence. She was a sunny-haired, dove-eyed, spring-hearted being, of a form faultlessly symmetrical, and a face fair, and pure, and joyous as a dream of happy childhood. Around her hung a nameless grace—an indescribable charm—a spell of enchanting witchery. Her feelings were deep, ardent and tender, and her soul, though bright and sparkling as the waters of the flashing sea, was sensitive almost to a fault. The sensitive plant was a very type of her delicate spirit. And oh, could you hear her laugh—her silvery laugh, that ringing echo of her spirit's joyousness, it was like the glad, free carol of the wild-bird, like the musical shout of a mountain stream, with an innate love of the beautiful stirring her soul to admiration at the works of the Great Architect, none the less powerful that her life hitherto had been spent immured in a great city, where the beauty of God's creation were made to give place and precedence to those of man—the maiden's heart was oft-times made to tremble at the *grandeur of nature* in the *west*, and how overwhelmed with sublimity at the visible foot-prints—the gorgeous tracery of the unseen power. In response to this sentiment was it, that having attained the summit of the hill, she leaned forward upon the coach-door, and gazed upon the picturesque scenery of her present romantic locality. It was a Kentucky landscape upon which the light of her diamond eyes so admiringly fell. Kentucky! the chivalric and the free! the home of the generous-hearted; the peerless daughter of the glorious "Old Dominion;" the cradle of heroes and their graves. *Kain-tuck-ee*—the land of early tragedy—the "dark and bloody ground," in whose soil mingled the dust of the pale-face and his red brother—grown stainless and pure in death-redeemed brotherhood. She thought of the time when the war-cry was heard, and the dying shrieks of women and children mingled in the startling battle-whoop of a merciless foe, and she questioned her heart "were the savage monsters human?" She thought again of the

time when the "sons of the wood" with a proud and dauntless tread had roamed this bright land, countless as the leaves of their own untracked forests, bowing the knee of thankfulness to the Great Spirit for the good hunting-grounds, living in peaceful possession of the rich domain, laving their dusky forms in the limpid waters of their mountain streams, or following the swift-footed stag—little less fleet themselves than he. But where were they now? Gone! gone! The white brother had come, and before his insidious encroachments "the Indian from the forest and the roebuck from the glen" had faded like the mist of morning. And now not one was left to recount the deeds of their warriors, or point out the graves of their sachems—not one permitted to linger near the bones of his ancestors. And the maiden asked her heart, "was this justice?"

At length her reverie was interrupted by her eyes falling upon a delicate and singular wild flower, which, as if planted by the "race of the rainbow-wing" as a place for their moonlit revels, had sprung up in the wilderness, and was blooming in beauty on the barren rock. The old coachman was despatched to obtain it, which he had succeeded in doing, and his mistress had just received it from his hands, when becoming suddenly frightened the horses attached to the carriage commenced rearing and plunging violently, and ere the terrified servant could seize upon the reins, madly bounded away.

Horror of horrors, with what fearful rapidity they drag the heavy vehicle and its lovely burden along. The road is a steep, winding descent, and certain destruction must result from that headlong flight. The dismayed old servant can only stand and shout, and swear, and swear and shout, while his white eye-balls seem starting from their sockets with dread. But he shouts in vain, the maddened beasts heed not his voice. At the moment the perilous flight had its inception, Colonel Denham, exhausted by his long and wearisome walk, had reached the summit of the hill, and was approaching the carriage from behind.

What were his feelings of agony when he saw the only being he loved or lived for, hurried to a speedy and horrid death. She was his precious, his only daughter, the last earthly link betwixt him and his buried Mary. And as an angle of the road suddenly hid the fated vehicle from view, with a mad cry he bounded forward with almost incredible speed. Rapid as was the pace of his heart-stricken master, the faithful servant kept close in his rear.

Isabel Denham felt herself at the mercy of the infuriated beasts, dragged she knew not where, and she roused the slumbering energies of her woman's heart to meet death in his most terrific form. "My doom is sealed," thought she, and

her pale lips tremulously murmuring, "there is no deliverance," she closed her eyes, and her insensible form glided from the seat to the floor. But the scroll of her fate was yet unwritten. The arm of the mighty was there to shield her from the embrace of the destroying angel.

A handsome and manly youth, in the garb of a hunter, was the means of her deliverance. At a glance comprehending the aspect of things, he, though standing some distance from the road, quickly leveled his unerring rifle, and ere its sharp echo had died away on the air, the leader was seen to shorten his sweeping gallop. A moment more, and the youth lifts from the carriage the inanimate form of the beautiful maiden, and tenderly bears it to a little rivulet that comes trickling down the mountain side. As he deposits the lovely girl upon the earth, the tiny flower falls from the folds of her rich travelling dress, and picking it up he has only time to secure it in his bosom, ere the parent and servant arrives. These two had witnessed Isabel's rescue, and their hearts were almost bursting with gratitude for the maiden's deliverance. "My noble young man," said the grateful father, his eyes glistening with tears of happiness, "how shall I ever repay your heroism? I am your debtor for life. But let me take your place," continued he, kneeling by the youth's side, who had commenced bathing the young girl's temples to restore her to animation. At this request, however, he resumed his feet, gave one lingering glance of admiration at the death-like features of the beautiful girl, and then with a light, quick step, unperceived by Colonel Denham, entered the forest and disappeared, not before, however, he had learned from the coachman the name of the being whose life he had saved.

Soon after the disappearance of the stranger youth, Isabel was restored to consciousness, and Colonel Denham, upon looking around to thank the preserver of his daughter's life, was surprised to find him gone. Ascertaining from George that the horse's fore-leg was fractured, he and Isabel left the old coachman in charge of the vehicle and baggage, and proceeded on foot to the nearest house, which proved to be a rough country inn, about half a mile from the scene of the evening's adventure, from whom assistance was despatched to George. The happy father, during their walk, recounted to his daughter every incident of her fortunate preservation—but upon arriving at the inn was unable to learn anything of the youth—not even his name—and much to his regret was compelled to proceed upon his journey, the subsequent day, without having obtained any information whereby he might hereafter recognize him. Isabel, who was of a romantic disposition, could not but think

that the flower (which having missed, and made George search for in the carriage, but which could not be found) would in some way reveal to her her preserver at some future period. *How* she could not tell—but her woman's heart told her the flower had been taken as a *token*—the thought was food for *dreams*. A few weeks elapsed, and Isabel Denham, like a fairy sprite, was floating through the gilded saloons of her father's lordly mansion.

The lofty Alleghanies raised their towering forms betwixt the rescuer and the rescued.

CHAPTER II.

A GIFTED one has said that time brings healing on its wings. Be it so, Howard Stanhope was an exception to the rule.

From the moment his ardent soul drank in the loveliness of the fair being he had rescued, his heart had not known content. It could not be said that he loved her. He did not love in the common acceptation of the term, he rather worshipped her as a being of another sphere. She had come to fill that void in his inner being, and to answer those strange and earnest longings which the gifted and the high-souled ever experience at one period of life: and he set apart a chamber in his heart where naught else might intrude to pollute the sacred presence of her image. For one like him it sufficed once to have breathed the same air, one brief moment to have held her to his bosom—to have been the preserver of her life. To many this may seem strange—but in it, perhaps, a few will recognize a kindred spirit.

Two years and a half had glided by on rapid wing since the poor hunter youth had rescued the proud daughter of wealth—years of change to *all*, to *none* more than him. Then he was an unknown country-boy—poverty-stricken, and an orphan—aimless, yet content. Now deserting his wild, western life, he was a lawyer, located at Washington city, and by his talents and energy fast gaining a most enviable reputation. At times he felt like repining, but anon such emotions would give place to nobler impulses, and then he would feel a proud consciousness of power—and visions of a life of future usefulness and greatness would float before his enraptured soul-gaze, till his brain would well-nigh reel with the intoxication—the mad intoxication of fame in the future.

And why, forsooth, might not he indulge such delirious fancies? They were born and nurtured in his brain, and their fulfilment was his birth-right. He was a man of mind, mind in its highest signification, its loftiest environment. His was an intellect that would dare the unattained, and dare it too confident of success. Little caring for

the grovellers about him, the seal of imperishable thought was set upon his broad, high brow, and he dwelt in a region loftier than the eagle's flying. His soul was the seat of every noble impulse. Ever mindful of the feelings of others, he would neither brook nor offer an insult: and he possessed that rare excellence in man of being as pure in conduct as in thought. Gentle and retiring in disposition as a woman—he was yet daring as the cleft cradled son of the Alps in pursuit of the bounding chamois—and under the seeming of a lamb slept the heart of the lion. Such, gentle reader, is Howard Stanhope, the poverty-stricken orphan, as he takes his place in the ranks of the favored sons of wealth just starting out on the great race of life. Do we not wish him success?

Howard Stanhope had now been in Washington about ten months. His career thus far had been fortunate. The second case he had at the bar was one of a poor, but honest man, with a large family, charged with a foul crime. Having undertaken the poor fellow's defence, Stanhope soon felt a conviction in his own mind of his client's entire guiltlessness, and his philanthropic heart becoming enlisted in behalf of justice and innocence, he labored energetically in the preparation of his defence. At length the day appointed for the trial came on. The strongest men of the bar had been retained for the prosecution, and thinking to gain an easy victory over their youthful, inexperienced opponent, had not paid that attention to the case which a successful prosecution of it demanded. On the other hand, the young lawyer had entered the court with a thorough knowledge of the case. He knew the evidence that each witness would give, and the consequence was, that after a skilful cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution, and a clear, pointed, yet eloquent address to the jury, that body returned a verdict for the defendant without retiring from the box. From this time our young counsellor rapidly rose into notice and favor: and previous to his present introduction had, on one or two occasions, evinced such magic powers of eloquence as to have been made the subject of special remark in some of the city journals. Thus he had acquired somewhat of notoriety, when one morning a handsome, fashionably dressed young man entered his office, and seating himself with easy familiarity, thus addressed him,

"Kentuck at study, as usual, hey? Well, there's no accounting for tastes. But now, my dear fellow, I must insist that you lay aside that dry, musty volume for a moment, and entertain a petition which I have to offer to your honor."

"The court will hear it," said Stanhope, with

a good-humored smile, chiming readily in with the playful mood of his friend.

"Here is the petition," said the latter, handing Stanhope a neat little envelope containing a card, upon which was beautifully lithographed the following:

"Mrs. Belmont's compliments to Mr. Stanhope for Thursday evening, the fifteenth, at nine o'clock."

"Really, Mortimer," began the young counsellor, "I fear I shall be compelled——"

"To accept," said Mortimer, "that you will. It will be decidedly the most brilliant soiree of the season. Everybody will be there, and it is high time you had made your *debut* in our delightful society."

"But," again began Stanhope, in an objecting tone.

"But me no buts," interrupted the gay votary of fashion, "I will have none of them. I even went so far as to pledge my word to my charming Mrs. Belmont, who is a great admirer of your state, that you would attend. So if you continue to oppose my plea with your *rebutters* and *rejoinders*, I must even proceed by writ of *attachment*, and *force* your attendance."

"Enough, I yield," said Howard, "I perceive you have planned and plotted for my destruction, and shall make no further resistance."

A gay assemblage of wealth and fashion had congregated in the chaste drawing-rooms of Mrs. Belmont, when Charlie Mortimer conducted Stanhope to where the elegant and accomplished hostess stood replying courteously to the salutations of her guests.

"Right welcome art thou, Mr. Stanhope, to the poor hospitalities of my house. I once had the pleasure of visiting your state," said she, frankly, "and my doors are ever open to her children." The kind, cordial manner of the lady's welcome, and her allusion to his native state, touched the young man's heart, and he responded,

"Some one has said that the truly noble never forget a kindness: if hereafter I err in giving to the sentiment my unlimited sanction, it will be a sin for which Mrs. Belmont must answer."

"My gallant chevalier," said Mortimer to him, as they moved on, "I had thought to give you some instructions in the sublime art of complimenting, but, by my faith, your speech to my lady hostess smacks somewhat of the days of knight-errantry—and the bow with which it was accompanied was perfectly inimitable—it was by Jove! Ah! there comes Harry Irvine," he continued, "he is perfectly unexceptionable, I assure you. Well-bred—seen much of the world—travelled in Europe, and all that. He'll be happy of your acquaintance—and I'll introduce you—and then leave you for a moment, while I shall

find what star is in the ascendant to-night." Here he was interrupted by the approach of Irvine, whom he introduced to Stanhope, and with some gay jest left them together. Mr. Irvine was a very handsome young man, but it soon became apparent to the former that to him, at least, he was an uncongenial companion. He was critical, sneering, supercilious, and imperiously selfish, yet withal polished, and evidently possessed of a good native mind. Still there was no sympathy between them; and Stanhope, fearful that his companion might feel constrained to keep him company until Mortimer's return, after a few moments conversation courteously separated himself from him.

Soon after this, in gazing about the room, his eyes fell upon a fair, sweet, joyous face he had seen once before in life, and his heart thrilled with a strange delight at being once more near her. He knew her name—that was all he knew, but he *felt* that she was no common being. While gazing upon her, unperceived, his mind naturally reverted to the time and scene of her rescue, and remembering how he had hung, in dreams, over her witching loveliness, a rush of wild emotions swept over his heart-strings like the echo of boyhood's dreams, or "birds of spring returning from afar," causing them to vibrate tones of thrilling, yet mournful sweetness. The maiden looked much as he remembered her, but there was an expression upon her face which had not rested there when he bathed her temples in the mountain rivulet—it was a look of majestic, queenly pride—perhaps the pride of the high-born—perhaps that of a haughty indifference to the throng of suitors that fluttered around her. But whatever its origin, it gave place to a warm, glowing blush of interest at the approach of a graceful, manly form—and as he perceived it, Stanhope's heart almost ceased to beat. A moment more and the face of the stranger, whose flattering reception he had just witnessed, was turned toward him, and he recognized the handsome features of—Henry Irvine.

Half an hour after he was found by Mortimer with head bent down and folded arms, pacing the balcony attached to Mrs. Belmont's mansion. "Howard, why did you play me truant? I have been seeking you a weary time. Come, let's return to the drawing-room."

"No," answered Stanhope, moodily, "I think I shall return to my office."

"Are you possessed man? Are you possessed, that you talk of returning to that narrow, little, low cell? Fie, fie, away with the 'azure demons.' Away with them, and let us, at least, be merry to-night! Out upon such stuff!"

"Mortimer," said his friend, pausing, and gazing in his companion's face, and his tone

bespoke something of bitterness, and his clear, manly voice rang out on the night air with a strange, but musical energy. "Why should I return to that glare of show," pointing in the direction of the revellers, "where gilded pomp and fashion's false tinsel pass for sterling gold? Believe me, I would but darken the brightness of your own glad heart, my friend, by the shadow of a spirit which is gloomy to-night—and lightly as I esteem the pleasures—the enticements of society, and its heart-lightening pastimes, I would not willingly place a cloud in the 'heaven of so fair a scene'—I have not been used to scenes like these. My youth and my manhood, alike strangers to them, were spent in a romantic, sequestered spot, where the song of the wild-bird and the murmuring of the mountain stream filled the soul with a delicious flood of melody, far sweeter than the siren song of fashion; and my spirit is bound to my far-off mountain home with a chain, whose links were wrought by a communion with nature and the Mighty Invisible. My heart, ignorant of the wiles of selfish deceit, and imagining the world to be pure as its image mirrored in my own untutored soul, I loved my kind with a deep, intense passion. I read books—books of history and poetry, and the cunning lore of antique times, and my soul held commune with the spirits of the air, and I learned to dream. Thus—thus might I have continued to dwell in the enchanted regions of the lofty spirit-life, peopled by bright creations of my own ideal nature; thus might have roamed over my own green-clad hills, content to live secluded and unknown, far from the turmoil and the strife—but that a something—a strange, indescribable, resistless something told me I *must away*—away to the *conflict* and the stern battle of life. I waited no second bidding, but at once bade adieu to the haunts of my boyhood. I looked through dimmed eyes on the stream and the wood, the companions of my youth, and my heart bears their image yet. In answer to the *power* I felt struggling within me, I launched my bark on the sea of *chance*, and have cast anchor in this proud city teeming with its busy thousands. I came to fulfil my destiny, to tread the path marked out for me among men. Life is too short to yield it all to mere sensual gratification—too precious to be wasted in idle dalliances with fashion's charms. While reason is spared me, 'tis my purpose to live for my country and my kind. Unaided and alone I shall toil for the great goal before me, and these dreams that haunt me with the scorching brilliancy of their fiery grandeur, shall be the beacon lights that lead me on to triumph, or the blazing funeral pyre of the hopes they have engendered."

While Stanhope was speaking his listener stood, as it were, spell-bound; by the fire and pathos of

his language, and when his accents died away he seemed unwilling to break the silence.

"One thing else," said Howard, "and I am done. In my western home I was the blessed instrument, in the hands of Providence, by which the life of a beautiful maiden was preserved. My nature is deep and ardent, and I worshipped the being I saved. She knows neither my person nor my name, and I had yielded all expectation of ever again beholding her, when to-night, in yon banquet-hall, she suddenly appeared before me, arrayed in all her former loveliness. My brain was on fire. The mad blood in my veins was as a lava-tide, and I sought solitude and found it on this moonlit balcony."

"By heavens! Stanhope," said Mortimer, "I see naught in what you have said about the maiden to cast a shadow on your spirit. Methinks were I you, I would rather go delirious with joy than speak in such mournful tones."

"You forget," answered Howard, "there's a difference, a wide difference, as the world makes it, between my sphere of life and her's: I am poor—she, from the splendor of her attire to-night, I doubt not is the heiress of fortune."

"Who is she, my friend, this paragon of perfection? Her name, Howard—her name?"

"Denham—Isabel Denham!"

"Ah!" said Mortimer, "I wonder no longer at your enthusiasm. She is the most beautiful, fascinating being I have ever known—a little romantic and visionary, perhaps a little haughty, and rumor says that the polished and *recherche* Henry Irvine is to make her his bride in the spring, but I hope for your sake this is not so. Allow me to suggest a course for your adoption, and my life on it you will be successful."

"Name it," said Stanhope, with animation.

"Well then," answered Mortimer. "First dismiss that gloomy shadow from your brow—recall the fire to your eyes that beamed so brightly there a moment since—renew your acquaintance with the witching beauty—inform her under what circumstances you formerly met, and 'write knave on my brow' if gratitude do not soon give place to a warmer sentiment."

"No! I would scorn to inform her of my identity with that of her unknown preserver," said Stanhope, proudly, "and I shall require from you a pledge to the same effect ere I receive an introduction to her."

The pledge was given reluctantly on the part of Mortimer: and then turning to the revel, our hero was formally presented to Miss Denham, the rescuer and the rescued once again had met.

CHAPTER III.

At the time of Stanhope's presentation, Irvine had succeeded in monopolizing her attention to

himself, in exclusion of half a dozen others who seemed content to gloat on Miss Denham's extraordinary loveliness in silence. The phase of the coterie was changed by the young counselor's introduction. Conversation became general, and all engaged in it with interest save Irvine, who had become unusually grave. The latter gentleman had imbibed a dislike for Howard Stanhope, during the few minutes spent in his society in the early part of the evening. He had felt that Stanhope had looked *into his heart*—had seen its utter selfishness, and with a malignant envy he hated—yes, hated him for it.

"Why so grave, Mr. Irvine?" said the sparkling beauty. "I would wage my brightest diamonds that you are pining for the society of those charming Castilian maidens, with whom you spent last summer. For aught we know to the contrary, gentlemen, this knight of the gloomy brow may yet woo for his bride some warm-blooded senorita of glorious old Spain. Ah! me," continued she, with a pretended sigh, "we rude girls of this young republic—we 'cold Americans' cannot inspire even a passing fancy in the bosom of those foreign-taught, fastidious gentlemen, who, like Mr. Irvine, have drunk in the beauty of other lands, and bent the knee of knightly homage to loveliness 'neath summer skies."

"Nay, Miss Denham, you are severe, I did not mean that you should so misunderstand any thing which may have fallen from my lips respecting the superior society of the transatlantics," responded Irvine, rallying. "What I said related rather to general regulations than the drawing of any invidious comparisons to society and not to individuals. And though it may not be at least *yet*, I for one would gladly see the same appropriate system of regulating the different classes of society as are there in vogue, adopted in place of our own loose and undefined rules. Then in society one would feel safe from the contact of those rude and unrefined parvenues—those miller boys and mechanics daughters with which, lamentable to say, our home society at present is so overstocked. What say you, gentlemen? Ah, I was sure you would think with me," said he, with a satisfied air, as a smile of assent spread over the faces of some of the whiskered, aping things that passed for men. From various causes it seemed that the gauntlet of discussion thrown down by the young man was not to be picked up. Some feared an encounter of a personal nature as the result of a discussion with one so fearless in the annunciation of his anti-republican sentiments. Some dreaded a tilt in the tournament of debate with so accomplished a conversationist and traveller as Irvine—while others still approved of his opinions. In that gay coterie, however, there was one proud heart

that had no sympathy with them. Calm and dignified in his bearing, Stanhope had awaited for some other to respond to Irvine, and perceiving their silence with regret, his chivalric spirit ever musical with patriotism prompted a reply.

"I feel assured," said he, courteously, "that Mr. Irvine will pardon me for expressing my dissent to the opinions he has so forcibly offered; but the school in which I have been taught recognize no difference among men, save that which has its origin in superior wisdom or more exalted virtue. These, and these only should constitute the basis of distinction in a government like ours, whether the view be confined to the limits of mere social organization, or extended to those of a more enlarged and political nature."

"Ho! a Daniel come to judgment!" sneeringly responded Irvine, incensed at the deference paid to the young stranger by the beautiful Isabel, who seemed to have been fascinated by his manner, and still regarded him with a look of admiration plainly visible. He was now determined to administer a rebuke which Stanhope should feel, and he continued in a contemptuous, sarcastic tone, evidently intended to insult his opponent—"if I mistake not Mr. Stanhope has a *personal* interest in advocating the doctrine of equal rights and privileges. Has it occurred to you, Miss Denham, that per possibility he belongs to that class of citizens which would reap the *sole benefit* from a practical illustration of his argument. No! let a line of distinction be drawn between the parvenue and the millionaire; in the very portals of refined and elegant society let there be placed, and at once, an impassable barrier to the entrance of vulgar tradesmens' sons, and low-born mechanics' wives and daughters, and, my word for it, henceforth distinguished foreigners in visiting our beautiful land will have no cause to complain as now, of the vulgarity of American manners."

As he ceased, all eyes were turned to the young advocate—some thinking as Irvine did that he was completely vanished. Little knew they the lion heart, and the towering, fearless, masterly intellect that was now fully aroused by his adversary's allusion to his humble origin, and foully charging him with base and selfish motives in the advocacy of his opinions. In a tone of lofty independence, yet with a courteousness of manner which gave an additional and indefinable charm to his appearance, and gained for him the respect of all who saw him, he responded.

"To the gentleman's exceedingly polite allusions to myself, I deign no reply, further than they tend to impugn the motives by which I was prompted to defend the institutions of my country. If I have hitherto labored under the

mistaken opinion that every native-born son of this broad, free land, with his childhood's breath inhaled the pure air of liberty, and learned to venerate as little less than holy those sterling principles of justice, upon which our great republic is founded, I am happy to know that it is to Mr. Irvine alone I am indebted for my enlightenment. Incited by a disinterested sentiment of patriotism, I said, and I now repeat it fearlessly and proudly, that the true criterion of distinction in every free government does, and should depend exclusively upon considerations of individual merit. No matter how humble its origin in this country, merit must and will win its way to eminence. You cannot so bar the doors of society that it will not find an entrance. To it the false pride of birth, and the glittering pageantry of wealth are as 'tinkling cymbals and sounding brass,' neither offering inducements to pander to *their follies*, nor raising up obstacles to check *its progress*. Other than those imposed by integrity and intellect, freedom recognizes no distinctions among her host of worshippers. Like the grave it is a universal leveller. Far be it from me to say aught calculated to interrupt the harmony existing between my own and any foreign land, yet earnestly and sincerely do I deprecate introducing into our social organization any of those unjust and impolitic distinctions which exist in nearly all European nations. I deprecate it because it would be giving tone to a principle utterly antagonistic to the spirit of our free institutions, which have their foundation in the eternal principles of right, and truth, and justice; because it would be to sanction an encroachment upon the equal privileges quarantined by the social compact to the humblest individual of this great confederacy. And defiant of the power of tyranny, or the base-born minions," and here his fiery eye rested on Irvine—"the base-born minions that pander to its lusts, I pronounce that he who would deny the doctrine of equal rights to all—the tenant in his hut, and the landlord in his palace, is not only a traitor to the blood of his ancestors, but unworthy the glorious heritage of liberty he enjoys, and unworthy the proud name of an American freeman."

"Villain!" hissed the infuriate Irvine, "your heart's base blood shall atone for this insult." A smile of haughty contempt, accompanied by a gentle inclination of the head, was the only reply Stanhope made to this passionate speech. And turning to Miss Denham with a low bow, in an earnest, yet most respectful manner, solicited her to grant him the honor of her company in a promenade. With this request she readily complied, and taking his proffered arm glided to another part of the saloon.

Time flew past on silken wing to the rapt soul

of Howard Stanhope, while pouring floods of eloquence into the charmed ear of his not unwilling listener. Like a spirit of light on the wings of sympathy she floated into the inner sanctuary of his spirit's temple. Yielding to the magic charm of congeniality, they roamed in a far-off imaginary world amid the exquisite creations of their own spiritual essences, each to the other a beacon and support. Strange seemed it, their thoughts had been one from childhood. They had built the same towering castles; yearned with the same insatiate longings, and were buoyed by the same half prophetic convictions of the future. Is it matter of wonder then that the heart of the maiden fled to its own ere even she felt the pluming of its wings?

"So, Ned, we are to lose the beautiful belle, Miss Denham, this spring," said a gentleman, to his friend, near by where Stanhope was standing alone just about the close of the evening.

"Yes," was the reply. "What a 'lucky dog' is Harry Irvine; if I possessed a 'cool million' I would part with it all to 'stand in his shoes.'"

Howard's heart sank within him. It was then true she was the affianced of his adversary. The thought was maddening, and at this very moment, as if directed by fate, to *heap up* the load of agony already weighing heavily on his heart, the two beings who were uppermost in his thoughts passed close by him. They were slowly promenading, and there was no mistaking the pleading look of the maiden, and "do not fight with him, *dear Mr. Irvine*," was uttered by her melodious voice. It fell upon the heart of the proud youth like the funeral dirge of happiness. The lips of the speaker quivered as she spoke, and there was love in the tone.

Howard Stanhope was once again in his office. He closed his eyes, but he could not shut out misery. Drops of agony rolled down his pale, colorless cheeks—and ere the moon went down, that livelong night a low moan as of breaking heart-strings, sounded through that narrow cell. The pale gleam of morning's light shone on his face calm as the serene sky of summer, but its expression was mournful as the grave of buried hopes.

While the pale student in his dim, lone abode was wrenching the hopes from out his heart with the giant hand of woe, beauty's ministering angel bent tenderly over the matchless form of a maiden of exquisite loveliness, as she tossed to and fro on her luxuriant couch, gently murmuring in her dream-haunted slumber, "he shall not slay thee! No! no! he shall not slay thee—thou canst not, shall not die." The entreating tones of Isabel Denham died away in soft echoes of liquid melody, and the white-winged angel fled.

"His doom is sealed, the base-born upstart!"

uttered Henry Irvine, as he stretched his handsome form to repose.

CHAPTER IV.

"I ACCEPT," said Stanhope, cheerfully, to Bracton, who had been the bearer of a challenge to him from Irvine, the morning succeeding the brilliant party at Mrs. Belmont's. "The time I would appoint at ten in the morning—weapons rifles at forty paces—but of these Mortimer will confer with you."

"All right! the sooner the affair is over the better," responded Bracton, professionally—and bidding a polite good morning to Stanhope, he departed.

An hour after and Charlie Mortimer was sitting in the "little cell," as he called it, in close conversation with our hero. "In the event that you fall, Howard, is there nothing I can do for you? Perhaps you have some message of kindness to send to your kindred?"

"Thank you," feelingly answered his companion, whose heart seemed melted by Mortimer's genuine sympathy, "I have no kindred. Like Logan 'not a drop of my blood runs in any human veins;' and if I fall, there are none left to mourn the stormy closing of my brief career. Yet I have one boon to ask. In that trunk to the left you will find a copy of Shelley, in whose leaves is a pressed flower. When this body shall be wrapped in the shroud, and the grave-worm shall batten on my flesh, now vigorous with life and instinct with energy; when the sepulchre shall hold this heart and the proud hopes it has cherished, take that flower—bear it to Miss Denham, and tell her it is the dying legacy of one who found her too soon, or—*too late*."

"I will," said Charlie, in a low tone, and soon after took his leave to prepare for the morrow. On his return home from Stanhope's office he called upon Mrs. Belmont, with whom he was quite a favorite.

"I heard this morning," said she, "that a duel is anticipated between Harry Irvine and the young Kentuckian. Is it so?" Now Mortimer was in honor bound to keep his friend's secret, and was on the point of stammering out some awkward answer which the lady perceiving; with the shrewdness of her sex divined its cause, and continued, "if, as I fear, those two young men design to engage in mortal combat—in case your friend Stanhope is wounded, I wish you to promise me that you will bring him here and allow me to be his nurse. Do you promise?" and she looked anxiously in his face.

"Stanhope is so proud," said he, "that I fear he will refuse aid from any one—but if necessary and possible it shall be as you desire," and they parted.

The hour appointed for the meeting found Stanhope, Mortimer, Irvine, Bracton, and a couple of surgeons on the ground ready for the work of destruction. The seconds had arranged every thing—such as measuring the distance, choosing stations for their principals, &c., and it only remained to "toss up" for the word. It is difficult to imagine a more interesting and thrilling scene than that which now presented itself. The seconds were "tossing up" for the word; the surgeons, with grave, serious countenances, looking toward the expectant combatants, stood a few paces off beneath a shady oak. And Irvine and Stanhope had "taken their places," and were leaning upon their rifles, awaiting the signal for action. Irvine's face looked pale, his brow was black with hate and lowering, and his eyes flashed like burning coals—yet at times his thin, white lips trembled and quivered convulsively. His antagonist's bearing was lofty, calm and commanding, expressing neither fear, nor hate, nor triumph. For a moment he was observed to look full at Irvine, and then withdrawing his gaze, he took a slip of paper and pencil from his pocket, wrote a few lines, and as Mortimer advanced and bade him God speed, handed it to him, with an injunction not to read it until after the duel was over. It had fallen to Bracton's lot to give the word. Having asked each of the parties if he was ready, and the answers of both being in the affirmative, a silence as of death for a moment succeeded. Then with a slow, distinct utterance came the words, "fire—one—two—" ere he had pronounced the word three a simultaneous report was heard from the two guns, and Irvine fell heavily forward. A moment more and Howard Stanhope sank slowly to the earth.

At first all thought Irvine was dead, but before his second and surgeon reached him he rose to his feet. The only damage he had sustained was a stung shock from his adversary's bullet—first striking the small silver buckle of his hat band, and then scraping his skull. But no so with Stanhope. He had received a severe wound in the side, and it was so long before the bleeding could be staunched that he fainted from exhaustion, and when he recovered consciousness it was only for a moment, and he became delirious. In this state he was removed to Mrs. Belmont's.

Before leaving the ground Mortimer, remembering the slip of paper he had received from Stanhope, took it from his pocket, and having perused it, handed it in silence to the surgeons. It contained these words:

"I could take his life, Mortimer, but for Miss Denham's sake I spare him. Examine the *buckle* upon his hat—I could strike his heart as easy."

"Noble fellow! generous-hearted man!" were the expressions that succeeded the perusal of

this proof of the wounded man's magnanimity in sparing the life of one whose whole heart seemed bent on depriving him of his.

A mother could not have been kinder to her own child, more considerate of his wants, nor devoted to his welfare than was the kind-hearted Mrs. Belmont to Howard Stanhope during the long weeks of suffering that elapsed ere he was able to leave his room. As soon as he became convalescent—with many expressions of gratitude to his motherly hostess—he expressed a desire no longer to intrude upon her hospitalities—but he was quickly silenced by that excellent lady who would not listen to such a proposal, and thence he began to be looked upon as one of the family. In the meantime his noble conduct in the duel had given him great eclat, and he bade fair to be made quite a lion of upon his recovery.

One day, while accompanying Mrs. Belmont in a ride, though he was yet quite feeble and thin, that lady ordered the coachman to set them down at a friend's house, as she wished to make a call. And Stanhope, not hearing the name, was ushered ere he was aware of it into the presence of Miss Denham. The shock was too great for his nerves in their present enervated condition, and he sank, staggering, into a chair. The ladies thought, at least Miss Denham, that it was only a sudden fainting spell, occasioned by over exertion; but Mrs. Belmont held to a different opinion. Howard soon recovered, and the morning passed rapidly and pleasantly away. Mrs. Belmont was delighted with Stanhope's unaffected, natural manner of uttering his thoughts; and Isabel once again yielded to the charmed influence of a mind that she could not but feel was the more powerful, yet nevertheless a counterpart to her own. As to Isabel, if Stanhope before had thought her irresistible, his opinion was now confirmed beyond a doubt. An air of grace—of purity breathed around her. The rude, foul breath of the world had left undisturbed the freshness of her spirit—and she seemed a perfect blending of simplicity and refinement. She was a *child* and yet a *woman*—though Howard verily thought her more angel than either. The day subsequent to this, Mrs. Belmont and Howard sat alone in the drawing-room of that lady's elegant mansion. "You are gloomy, Mr. Stanhope," said she.

"I have not the courtesy to deny it," was his polite, though mournful response.

"Well, let me see, if I have heard any news to-day!" said the lady, in a cheerful tone, "perhaps I can dispel your sadness."

"I fear not, madam!"

"Have you heard," said she, "of Miss Denham's dismissing Irvine?" Stanhope started, and the blood rushed to his face, but his hostess continued, "I have no doubt its true. He took

his departure yesterday for Europe, I suppose, to conceal his disappointment and heal the wound."

As the lady imparted this information to her companion his emotion was plainly visible—and in a few moments he retired to his room. Howard's love for Isabel Denham was no secret from Mrs. Belmont. She had heard him mutter her name in his delirium in terms of the most passionate endearment—and feeling an interest in his success, had given Miss Denham a detailed account of the duel, &c., and as may be supposed the generous-hearted girl did not fail to admire his noble conduct. With the news of his rival's dismissal came fresh, young hopes budding in the noble soul of Howard Stanhope. With a palpitating but manly heart he entered the lists, and ere the lapse of a month from the date of Irvine's departure, he had won from Isabel, the peerless queen of his soul, the blushing acknowledgment that to him was confided the first pure love of her maiden's heart.

"I have nought to offer her," said he, to Col. Denham, some weeks subsequent to the above, in asking his approbation to a union with his daughter—"I have nought to offer her but a heart that has never cherished a dishonorable emotion—and a name that it shall be my ambition to render dear to the hearts of my countrymen."

"These are enough," was that gentleman's response, "they are better than *riches* or the *pride of birth*. I perceive you have an *honest ambition*, and love *your country*—and though the world calls me wealthy and you poor—being a man of principle and a patriot you are my *equal*, and I am proud to know that my daughter has chosen so wisely." And Col. Denham shook Howard's hand with honest sincerity.

Thus was Stanhope with a heart singing its own wild notes of happiness, treading on roses, and his thirsty soul drinking deep draughts of bliss from love's exhaustless goblet. The tones of gladness now were sounding a joyous echo to the mournful wail that erst while had gone out from his writhing spirit. Fair flowers were springing up in the garden of his heart—and the sparkling fountains of requited affection were watering them into more than earthly beauty. But how sudden are the changes of life—of the human heart, which *is* life. A moment the morning twilight spreads its misty mantle—another brings the warm sunshine dazzling in splendor. Yet speedy as the lightning's flash, and then all is enshrouded in the impenetrable folds of night's sable garments. At early dawn the young fledgeling hope creeps with timid, feeble fluttering to the top of its nest—but soon frightened and still weak, clings in trembling doubt upon the edge of its narrow abode, longing yet fearful; but time brings power, and high noon sees the nestling

fearless and free, a full, fledged bird, soaring on wing unconfined and tireless, bathing its gorgeous plumage in the flashing sunlight of heaven, like a freed spirit mantling in the light of immortality. Anon, evening comes, and the proud flight is done—the springing pinion is drooping and weary—the “soaring eagle is struck”—and the dust of earth soils the plumage that but now so brightly flashed in the gleaming floods of heaven’s sunlight.

The arrow that struck Howard Stanhope’s proud bird of hope to the heart, was the following note received by him one evening, while sitting quietly musing in his office:

“Mr. Stanhope—The heart you would have betrayed has discovered your baseness, happily in time to profit by the knowledge. Seek not an interview with the writer, as your presence would be adding insult to injury—and with the hope of never again meeting you, you are forever discarded by
ISABEL DENHAM.”

Ha! what terrible mystery was this? to what baseness of his does she allude? Can it be that she is changed, that she has already repented the folly of loving the humble child of poverty?—perhaps so, at least so thought, so feared Howard Stanhope. He re-perused the note—his eyes did not deceive him—he was “forever discarded”—discarded too by Isabel. She to whom he had suffered his soul to bow as his kindred spirit—whom he had worshipped with little less than passionate idolatry, and whom he had fondly trusted was to have been his life-mate on earth, and—in heaven. With sudden energy he turned and addressed the bearer of the missive, “is your mistress—is Miss Denham at home?”

“No, sir,” politely responded the servant, who seemed to understand that something had gone wrong, “she and her father left the city, this morning, ‘to travel,’ they said, and expected to be absent a long time.”

“Did she leave any message for me except this note?”

“None, sir, she gave it to me as she was leaving, and she looked so concerned-like, so sorrowful that I thought at first there was something the matter with her—but when she took old master’s arm, and walked to the coach that was to convey them to the depot she looked quite cheerful, and I really believe she was glad to leave the city.”

Stanhope passed a shilling into the servant’s hand, who, after a profusion of bows and grins, finally made his exit, leaving the young lawyer alone—alone in his misery—alone in the wretchedness of *thwarted hopes, despised love*. The towering fabric of bliss in the future which he had builded on the platform of requited affection, was in one brief moment shattered to atoms by a shaft hurled from the thunderbolt of

disappointment—the simoom of *doubt or change* had turned the garden of his soul into a desolate waste, the gentle zephyr whispering delight to his life-boat on a calm and tranquil sea wooing it to a haven of bliss, was now the muttering of the storm—the tempest’s growl, the wail of the blast—the wild scream of the tornado as it drove his careering bark over the mad, wide waste of waters toward the maelstrom of destruction—and in the moment of his utter wretchedness Howard Stanhope cared not to avoid the whirlpool. He would even have *steered for it*. But there’s an essence of good in everything evil, an oasis in every desert. Yes, the war-cry of woe may be heard in the heart, and the dark vultures of despair on swooping wing scent from afar the blood of battle, but from out the terrible conflict that which is pure shall come purer and brighter, and that which is good shall come like gold from the furnace, yet more refined—and in the sight of men and of angels more lovely and more exalted. The mariner may lose his compass in an unknown ocean on the trackless deep, when the storm-king is abroad in his wrath, and the red thunderbolt pierce the bosom of the waters, and the angry waves leap aloft in the strife as if to put out the stars, and the torch of hope is extinguished in the hissing billow. Yet when the “anchor is cast on the arm of the ‘mighty to save,’” the winds will be lulled, the storm-king will sleep in billow-rocked tranquillity, and fair islands will spring up from the bosom of the deep, where the wrecked mariner may *repair his vessel, provide another compass, and re-light his torch of hope*. Even thus

“Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep, wide sea of misery.”

And happily for Howard Stanhope and those like him there are “many green isles.” Not one to waste life in vain repinings, believing that Isabel had either changed in her feelings toward him, and took this means to break the bond that united them, or that she had suffered herself to dismiss him, unheard, in consequence of a mere misapprehension, a false report, a malicious slander, he called pride to his aid, and with a compass pointing to “the steep where fame’s proud temple shines afar,” he steered on under the light of hope’s torch, once quenched in the cold waters of disappointed love, yet re-kindled at the scorching fires of ambition.

“Well,” said he, to himself, a few months subsequent to Isabel’s dismissal of him, and her departure from the city, “it was a bright, heavenly, gorgeous dream—too glorious perhaps for mortal destiny. Well for me that it ended so early. In the sunshine of love the wings of my ambitious spirit were fast scorching their brilliancy and wasting their power. Now that it is ended, to toil unremitting and sleepless energy shall be

given to those capacities which else would waste in despondency and gloom. There is a *power within me whose calls must be answered*. All are born for a *purpose*. The chirping wren fills his allotted sphere, as the proud eagle his, and wren or eagle while my pinions are free, I shall speed on to the fulfilment of mine."

CHAPTER V.

TURN we now, gentle reader, and retrace our steps in order to find, if possible, the clue by which to unravel the mysterious cause of Miss Denham's apparently cruel note to our hero. A wilful, weak-minded girl, niece to Mrs. Belmont, who lived with her aunt, becoming smitten with the interesting invalid during Howard's illness at the house of that excellent lady, and at length discovering his attachment to Miss Denham, determined to defeat their alliance if possible. Sometimes even to the evil-minded fate seems peculiarly propitious—at least so thought this young lady when, one morning, her maid handed her a bundle of letters, from which having unloosed one, she discovered it to be addressed to Mr. Stanhope, written in delicate, feminine character, and signed truly and devotedly yours, Mabel Howard." They were all of the same nature, and bearing the post-mark of Kentucky, and directed to Washington city, D. C. And be "Mabel Howard" whom she might, it was evident that her whole heart was given to Mr. Stanhope.

For the reader's enlightenment we will here state that these were letters written by Howard's mother, in her maiden days to her affianced husband, who had spent a few months in Washington previous to his marriage. Howard had preserved them as a sacred relic of his dead mother's affection, she having confided them at her death to his care. And it was after perusing them, that in attempting to place them in his pocket one morning while leaving his room at Mrs. Belmont's, they fell, unperceived, upon the floor—were picked up by the housemaid, and came to Miss Johnson's hands as before stated. That model of jealousy soon perceived that fortune had thus placed in her possession the very means by which she could accomplish her heartless design on the unsuspecting girl and her innocent lover—we say she readily perceived that she had the means, and she scrupled not to use them. It was but the work of a moment to alter the figures of the dates of two or three of the letters—the months already corresponded, so that it should seem that Stanhope had been playing false to Miss Denham, and then taking those she had altered and secreting the rest, with a distressed and anxious countenance called upon Isabel. Seemingly unaware of Stanhope's attention to the latter, she pretended to make her the confidant

of her woes—with well dissembled tears and sobs told her that the unfeeling wretch, alluding to Howard, after having paid her every delicate attention, had succeeded in obtaining her consent to become his wife, when the accident of this morning had revealed him in his true light. And here showing the dates of the letters to her soul-stricken auditor, she read aloud some endearing love passage in each—and only took her departure when the quivering of her companion's lips told too truly that her vile purpose had been accomplished.

Her heart wrung with agony while listening to the dark recital—it was with almost superhuman efforts that Isabel could command herself until her visitor was gone. Even then her proud soul rose in the majesty of injured innocence while she penned the note, which as has been already seen, Howard received. Having despatched it, for a time she yielded her haughty spirit to sorrow, her very heart seemed drowned in woe. That night she told her sympathizing father all—and, in compliance with her request to travel, the subsequent morning they bade adieu to their home. Isabel felt that her idol had been shaken, not shattered. She had loved Howard as all true women ever love—for what she *thought him*. He had deceived her, and she was again *heart whole*. It came not over her like a *chilling blight*. She felt that she *had been deceived*—but that *now she was free*—that instead of *losing a treasure* she had *escaped a calamity*—and she passed through the ordeal unharmed, purified, etherialized.

We have said that when Stanhope last kindled his torch of hope it was at the blaze of ambition's fire—and of a truth rapid was his flight to eminence. His was the untiring wing of the eagle. Washington the succeeding summer and winter again resounded with the praises of a gifted orator. Many thought he over-tasked his powers by too close confinement—many whispered that in the fiery, powerful, enthusiastic mind of the dark-eyed son of genius there lay concealed some hidden sorrow—some gnawing canker. But this was only surmise, suspicion. Society opened to him her bosom, but he sympathized not with her pleasures. Birth and wealth felt that within him was mirrored an aristocracy loftier than that which they claimed. Fashion, arrayed in the profusion of showy splendor, opened to him her garden of delights—but her tinselled flowers were passed unheeded by—and soon the lone orphan, with a warm heart full of the noblest and most generous impulses, was regarded as *cold, unfeeling, haughtily vain and proudly selfish*. Thus erred who considered him such—and thus often in error is the wise world's judgment. There's a keen and subtle susceptibility of temperament in the lordly heritage of *mind*, which added to feelings

of a nature delicately refined, and a sensitiveness whose threads are thinly spun as the spider's-web, oft-times renders the possessor impatient, lightning-like, eagerly impulsive, yet ever generous, ever sympathetic. Over this the cold calculating philosophy of those less gifted carelessly throws a freezing damp, and then forsooth, charges upon the hearts chilled by its own reckless folly mawkish delicacy, ridiculous eccentricity, or repulsive waywardness of temper. Thus is it that a *mark* is placed upon the gifted and the generous-hearted, and a line of distinction drawn between them and the *common*. Little think they who draw it, it is drawn *forever*. Well do I know that upon the former rests the charge of making the invidious distinction—nobly, meekly and in silence have they bore it. Still oh, how unjustly burthened such many a warm and tender heart, many a grand and lofty mind would tell in tones of mournful, yet truthful eloquence, could we but for one brief moment lift the veil that hides the inner sanctuary. But enough of this. Cold as he seemed, reserved as he really was, on went Howard Stanhope in the fulfilment of his duties, winning laurels as he progressed. He had a towering intellect—a grasp of thought—an originality of conception seldom equalled, but the secret of his success after all was his sleepless, giant-like unwearying energy. It never flagged, no matter how arduous the task—how difficult the obstacles, or how steep the eminence. He determined to triumph—to win the race for which he had entered—to work out good for his kind, and to make himself a beacon light to those who should follow in the track of his progress. These drove him on—resistlessly on. Oh, it is a grand and cheering sight to behold the human intellect battling with fate for the victory—successfully battling for the right. And proudly, eminently victorious was Howard Stanhope. He lived with an *aim*. He fought with a *purpose* and for an *end*, and success crowned his *efforts*. The down-trodden children of misfortune whom he sought out and relieved from oppression and wrong, rose up and blessed him; a life of active benevolence, and a consciousness of having well performed the duties of his calling, were well-springs of pleasure to him, as they are never rewardless—but was he *happy*? were his bright anticipations realized? Did the fame he had gained answer his soul-longings? Did he never ask himself the question, “what had become of the being whose spirit he had once felt was twin to his own?” Ah! he had called it a gorgeous *dream*, and said, “*it was ended*”—but was it so?

Summer came, and Stanhope's declining health had rendered change of air necessary, at least so said his medical advisers, and the height of the watering season found our young counsellor one

of many hundreds of Saratoga's summer-birds, very few of whom like himself were *invalids*—the rest being votaries of pleasure. Gay beauties were there—dashing city belles, some of whose debuts had marked the present season as society's brightest era—while others again resembled luna on the wane. Manœuvring mammas seeking establishments for their three charming daughters, with whom, when married, the lady mother and four other junior specimens of feminine grace were to reside until *they* in turn should be established—the wealthy merchant—the broken banker, reputed a millionaire—the foppish scion of an aristocratic house, discoursing in cockney phrase upon the points of his span of horses, inheriting his equestrian talent from his grandfather, who was a head hostler at a dirty country inn. The whiskered roue of genteel dress, who lets fall proverbs of wisdom and morality to the man of leisure and jewelry with the gold-headed walking-cane—in the morning, forgetful that only the night previous, side by side, they fought the spotted tiger—they turned the wheel of fate and fortune, winning and losing dollars and cents in a gambling-hall. There was also the young hopeful taking sherry with the abandoned drunkard—arm-in-arm the parson and the profligate, the miser and the spendthrift, the rosy-cheeked youth and the hoary-headed licentiate. A strange incongruous mass—yet such an one oft-times may be seen at fashionable watering-places. Stanhope had been at Saratoga about a week. He had been introduced to the celebrated statesman H— C—, of Ashland, who with a small party of friends was spending a short time at the Springs. Having no other acquaintances, he joined himself to Mr. C—'s coterie at that gentleman's polite invitation, and was ever seen at the side of the lovely Miss W—, of Kentucky, whenever her fairy form made its appearance in public. Miss W— had many admirers—yet though constantly surrounded by suitors, it was evident that Stanhope was the favored one. If she rode, he was sure to be her gallant—in an evening promenade it was upon his arm she most frequently leaned—and when upon the balcony, beneath the tremulous light of the liquid moon, she sang love songs to the music of the harp—she ever unconsciously, as it were, turned to Stanhope's dark eyes for sympathy.

And yet, gentle reader, there was no love between the accomplished Julia W— and our hero. Each possessed the admiration and esteem of the other in the highest degree—but the lady was already affianced to a youth in her western home, and Stanhope was not one to erect a second altar to love ere the fires of a first were entirely consumed. Stanhope had been at Saratoga, as we before remarked, about a week, when one

evening he suffered himself induced to escort Miss Julia to the ball, which is a nightly entertainment at this place. Now in this there is nothing strange or worthy of special notice—or rather there would not be, but the present was quite an extraordinary affair, the ball being no less than a real downright masked one. Nay, friends, be not displeased at my introducing you to that much berated thing, a masked ball. I am sure it contains not those evils dire which pseudo moralists charge it with engendering. The fear is all in the name as is the *danger*—and neither are worthy of note. The one is a huge bugbear without reality—and the other, feeble morality frightened at its own lean shadow. Think what harm is there, what harm can there be in covering the so-called human face divine with a thin, bent painted pasteboard, which serves only as a means of concealing that which it so elegantly caricatures. You say it is *false*—remove it, and in how few cases is your opinion altered of the face its removal reveals. And not alone forsooth, in the crowded ball-room are false faces to be found. They dot the wide world over—and those who would remove them must not pause to examine the outward demeanor. The evil has a deeper root—and those who would seek a remedy must delve in the garden of the heart. All this by the way. In the meantime Howard Stanhope had become separated from his charming lady companion, and was standing in pensive attitude in a rather forsaken portion of the long apartment which was the scene of the festival, when he suddenly found himself surrounded by a troupe of laughing maidens, who besieged him most unmercifully. Some entitled him Jupiter, and humbly craved his generosity to instruct them in the dance of the stars—some claimed immortality for having discovered in him the lost pleiad—one begged that he would inhale the delicate odor of a posey, a late discovery in botanical science by Flora in the mountains of Peru—and in a moment he grasped at the top of his head, fearing that it would be a total loss so sudden and so powerful were the effects of a miniature bottle of hartshorne, which the fair tormentor applied to the orifices of his nasal organs—gracefully bent down to inhale the delicate odor of the Peruvian posey. Another, and yet another, yea, *all* had some weapon of *attack*—now lavish of praise—now punning maliciously at his expense. At length skilfully parrying with courteous, yet playful raillery the shafts of their wit, while apparently yielding to inglorious defeat, he suddenly seized a graceful, gazelle-like figure by the hand, (one too who had been conspicuous in her pungent satire above all her companions) and laughingly, yet with gentle violence bore her from the gay troupe and joined the throng of

dancers. In the spirited reel or the more elegant quadrille, Howard's companion moved with the same faultless grace. She danced elegantly and modestly with the most exquisite precision—and it seemed that her very soul floated on the waves of melody, and there was music in her every motion. So charmed was our hero, that when the fair masker, or rather to distinguish her from the rest, (for she wore a blue domino) when the blue domino grew weary of the dance he led her to an adjoining drawing-room, where were already a few other maskers paired off, and sought to learn more of her. It could not be denied, Stanhope was already on the confines of the blind god's kingdom.

We will not detail the conversation that passed between him and his companion of the blue domino. He found her gentle, yet dignified, frank, but not familiar, seemingly artless, yet perfectly refined. And when she spoke, Stanhope almost started at the low, liquid tones of her melodious voice, so like were they to those of her whom he had formerly loved—"but no, she could not be the same," thought he, and giving wing to his lofty imagination, he was soon roaming in the land of the high ideal, happy to have a sympathetic listener. But time wore on, and as the ball was drawing to a close, Stanhope, after a few minutes earnest pleading, obtained a reluctant consent from his companion to meet him on the morrow in the public drawing-room, the very room in which they now sat. They were each to wear a rose-bud as a means of recognizing the other—the lady's in her hair, the gentleman in the button-hole of his vest. It was stipulated that the lady, if sufficiently pleased with his appearance to honor him with her acquaintance, should signify it by taking the rose-bud from her hair and placing it in her bosom—if not, however, the gentleman was not to presume to speak to her, or seek an introduction—and thus they parted. In escorting the beautiful Miss W—— from the festival, she pleasantly charged him with his devotion to the blue domino—and laughingly rallied him as at last a victim. "Ah! how your air castles will totter and crumble," said she, "when your fair incognita shall prove to be a venerable spinster in search of a husband and a home, or a staid matron who will send her liege lord to demand the meaning of your sentiments. Take care, Mr. Stanhope," and the light-hearted girl bade him good-night.

And take care, Mr. Stanhope, say we, with the fair Julia, for venerable spinster, sober matron or blooming maiden—of a verity did Howard Stanhope that night dream of *blue rose-buds*. There, reader, you have it, *sober, sensible, Howard Stanhope* dreamed, actually dreamed of *blue rose-buds*—what an anomaly! They were showered

around him, but he could not grasp them. They hung above him, but they were *beyond his reach*.

CHAPTER VI.

ABOUT eleven o'clock the next morning, attired in a plain white dress, which fitted her exquisite form to perfection, with no ornament save a tiny rose-bud in her luxuriant hair, sat a beautiful girl upon the very sofa occupied the night previous by the lady in the blue domino. The drawing-room was well filled with numerous ladies and their admirers. Anxious suitors were swarming around her, too, but her eyes were wandering in search of a counterpart to the flower in her hair. Suddenly they fell upon a rose-bud dangling to a gentleman's vest in a distant part of the room. She raised them to his face. He had already discovered her, and seemed to be gazing with eager interest toward her. Now was the propitious moment to transfer the tiny flower to her heaving bosom. But no! a smile of scorn spreads over her beautiful features, and with a slightly heightened color she turned away, and continued conversing with increased animation. And there stood Howard Stanhope with arms folded over a heart well nigh bursting with misery. He had not mistaken the low, sweet, silvery tone of the maiden. The blue domino and Isabel Denham were one. Strange coincidence! Fully convinced by the look of haughty contempt with which she had regarded him, that her heart no longer beat responsive to the music of the past, he turned and left the room, and in the solitude of his chamber sought communion with his torn and bleeding spirit. Ah! woe to the true-hearted who love on through chance and change the same. Stanhope had compared his love to a dream, and said, "it was ended"—to a fire, and thought it extinguished. But he was to be no longer deceived. Not extinguished, it had only slept—slept the sleep of the volcano. Once again aroused—it swept over his heart like the burning stream of a lava tide—the resistless sweep of the mad tornado. And come what would, he determined to seek an explanation from Isabel herself, if that were to be obtained—if not, from her father.

Certain despair were preferable to this suspense. Another week rolled on, and Stanhope had not yet been able to obtain an interview with Miss Denham. He wished it to appear the result of accident, and hitherto no fit opportunity had offered. In the meantime he was the constant companion of the fair Julia W—, and gossip had already announced him an accepted suitor.

And how was it with Isabel? Since her departure from Washington more than a year before, many worthy hearts had paid homage at the shrine of her witching loveliness, and many love

tones had fallen upon her ear—but all were unheeded, all in vain. And now that she had again met with one whom she considered the betrayer of her affection and confidence, it was strange how her heart fluttered at his presence. What to her that he was so soon to claim Kentucky's fair daughter for his bride? Had she not the proofs of his guilt? and was he not unworthy even of a thought? But hush, a strange, curious thing is the human heart—who can know it? One evening, the evening before her expected departure for Washington, while sitting conversing with a few friends in the drawing-room, she caught the eyes of Stanhope fixed upon her with a look of the most tender, yet mournful interest, and she thought she heard him sigh as he passed slowly out. "What a handsome, noble-looking young man," said one of her female companions, "I wonder who he can be?" No reply was made, however, by any of the party, and the conversation was resumed.

Soon came the hour for the accustomed dance. Gayer, more brilliant than usual, the peerless Isabel floated through the saloon, making all hearts conquest by the magic of her smile. She was to bid adieu to-morrow—and profuse were the regrets offered at her expected departure. Elated by her success, and giving free scope to the buoyancy of her disposition, she shone more resplendently beautiful than ever, and bore off the palm from every competitor. "Oh, how happy, how joyous," was the mental ejaculation of those who watched her beaming face in the dance. And yet somehow that night it happened the fair beauty's pillow was wet with tears—shallow in the heart must be the fountain of sorrow that will not sometimes overflow. When she arose the next morning, upon her toilet lay a note addressed to her, in characters she but too well remembered. They were those of Stanhope. Hastily obeying the impulse of her ardent nature she opened it, and read. It was short, but oh, how pleading.

"Isabel—Why, why, did you leave me? Till the hour I met you here I deemed my love had faded away, but it is bright as in its early days. Since my separation from thee I have sought fame, and the sound of its trump filled the wide air around, but I looked into my heart and the void was still there—the void which you alone can fill. Believe me, you have labored under some woeful misapprehension to cause you to despise one whom you once blessed with your love. I am not unworthy—cast not unheeded from you a heart that is all your own—but say that I may come to thee, my bright, my beautiful—say that I may claim thee my own." Ere she finished reading, the blinding tears unrestrained coursed down her pale cheeks. Laying

aside the note, she perceived that the envelope was not yet empty, when giving it a gentle shake out fell a faded, pressed, withered flower. Ha! what miracles do seeming trifles work! Faded, withered, changed, yet still the same. Isabel Denham's trembling, beating heart at once recognized the wild flower of the mountain, to obtain which her life had been well nigh lost, and with the recognition came a host of mournful memories mingled with some of a brighter hue. Stanhope then once fondly loved, but now discarded, yet still pleading, and her unknown preserver were one. In it she deemed she saw the shaping of destiny—the hand of unseen power, and quick as the lightning's flash came the conviction never again to be shaken of her lover's innocence. Tears of joy like drops from the overflowing goblet of bliss, silently rolled down her lovely face, and while the angel of mercy fanned her heart with its white wings, she seized a pencil and wrote—

“Come, dear Howard, forgive, and come to
YOUR OWN.”

And thus did Howard Stanhope win his peerless bride. Isabel in due time learned the secret of the letters, which, through the baseness of an evil heart, had been the means of all her trouble, as they had been the cause of all her doubt. The intriguing Miss Johnson married a wealthy wool cander, who had too much love for his money to waste much of his precious affection on his wife, and too much admiration for the white and brown of his “rolls” to devote any extraordinary amount of it to the “pink and yellow” of her complexion, and so after a few months of wedded discomfort she died of jealousy and the phthisis. Harry Irvine, in returning from his second tour in Europe, with his head filled with ridiculous notions of high-bred aristocracy, and his heart cherishing a feeling of profound contempt for American conventionalism, was shipwrecked and lost. Charles Mortimer, like his friend Stanhope, has become the happiest of men, and has an elegant estab-

lishment in the fashionable portion of the capitol, over which his charming young wife presides with becoming dignity and grace, as we lately had the pleasure of testifying in person. Mrs. Belmont, heaven bless her, is Mrs. Belmont still, a true-hearted, perfect woman, and living in the same imposing mansion in which she so cordially welcomed our hero on the night of his debut. Her doors are still ever open to strangers of worth, though she yet maintains her wonted preference for Kentuckians.

All have their weaknesses—those of Julia W—were vanity and avarice. She coquetted her young affianced for a wealthy, ugly, uninteresting man, whom she married the winter after leaving Saratoga, and removed to the east. But she found too late that gold does not bring happiness, and ten months from her cruel desertion of her former lover, they both slept broken-hearted in the narrow confines of the grave.

Lastly, Howard Stanhope, our hero, is still as eloquent and energetic as in the days of his early youth. Having risen from the humble walks of obscurity to a seat in the high places, he yet remains uncontaminated by the pride of exalted station, a true patriot, devoted to the interests of his country.

Some whose eyes shall fall upon this page may never have the fortune to meet with Howard Stanhope—yet in this broad land of republicanism there are many like him. Oh, that the lives of such may be devoted like his to noble aims, the welfare of their country, and the perpetuation of her free institutions. Let them arouse from the lethargy of indolence and arm for the conflict—let them work, and work with an aim—let them leap into the breach and battle manfully, battle for human freedom. The arena is world-wide, and the followers of tyranny are bound legions. Let them strike off the shackles—the shackles of ignorance, the tyrant—and redeemed, worship at the altars of wisdom, and freedom, and truth.

ISABELLE ARLINGTON.

BY EDITH BUTLER.

IN a comfortable farm-house, in one of our inland counties, lived the Arlingtons, a family which had once been rich, but which now had a hard struggle to keep up appearances. Mr. Arlington was improvident in his habits and tyrannical at home. The wife was a weak woman, who had married her husband for his beauty, and who had long since subsided into a mere household drudge, without energy to redeem the family, and scarcely patience enough to endure her lot.

Indeed, but for her eldest child, Isabelle, Mrs. Arlington would have sunk under her burdens. But this daughter, from her very childhood, had been taught to assist her mother; and day after day poor Isabelle sewed on, helping to make up garments for the six younger children, and doing other things needful in a large household. Her pleasures were few and her sorrows many. But she was fortunately fond of reading, and over a new book, or periodical, whenever she could get one, she found some relief for her lot. Naturally of a romantic turn, and unacquainted with real life, she solaced herself by imagining herself the heroine of some story; and she often dreamed, in vague reveries, as she sat at her work, that, at some future day, a handsome and noble-hearted lover would redeem her, by marriage, from her thralldom.

Isabelle had frequently been invited by her relations to pass some time with them in the town where they resided. These invitations her father had never allowed her to accept, but one day to her great surprise, when she was about sixteen, he announced his intention of permitting her to spend some weeks with this family, and as he was shortly to visit the city on business, he proposed that she should accompany him. Those only who have been confined to an uncomfortable home for many years can form an idea of Isabelle's delight.

Arrived at her destination, kind friends greeted her with affection she had been little used to experience; and she found herself at once a member of a large, delightful, happy family. The acquaintances of her relatives called on her; she was invited out, admired and sought after. Her existence was totally changed. From a gloomy, joyless home, where discord reigned supreme, this cheerful, happy life appeared like a vision of Paradise. She mingled in society, and seized

with avidity every pleasure presented, because all was so new, so delightful.

Among her new acquaintances was one superior to all, in intellect at least. His personal appearance was pleasing and interesting, though not remarkably striking; and not the least like the beau ideal which had so long haunted Isabelle's imagination. He had neither dark hair nor eyes, nor was he remarkably tall. He did not mingle in the glittering throng around her, but stood aloof, and when others flattered he did not even compliment. When surrounded by frivolity and gaiety, he quietly withdrew; but when the summer evenings came, he would persuade her to accompany him along the banks of that beautiful river, over those lovely hills, and talk to her of everything but love. Isabelle soon learned to regard him as a friend, and felt no fear of any warmer feeling. She thought it all very pleasant; and sighed when she remembered how soon it must end, and she return to that dark, gloomy home, now ten times darker, gloomier than ever, from the joyous contrast.

The mandate came; she must go, must leave all that was bright and pleasant, all the kind friends she had learned to love so well, the balls, the concerts, the morning rides, the social evening gatherings, and last not least, *Henry Stanley*. The last evening arrived, her friends gathered around her to say farewell, but Stanley was not among them. Isabelle's eye was not so bright, nor her manner quite so brilliant and sparkling as usual, but that was very natural, and her friends thought it quite flattering to their vanity. Yes, Isabelle, the timid, quiet Isabelle, when released from the chain that bound her spirit down, had become a striking and a brilliant woman.

She returned home dull and dispirited once more, under that stern eye to resume her homely duties; but with recollections of the past, instead of dreams of the future to occupy her mind. Which was the most dangerous?

Months passed away. One Sunday Isabelle went as usual to church. What was her surprise, among some strangers recently settled in the neighborhood, to recognize Stanley. I do not think Isabelle was attentive as usual to her devotions that day. After church, she was accosted by him and informed that the persons he was staying with were old friends and relatives, who had persuaded him to spend some time with

them at the place they had recently purchased in that parish. Isabelle's delight on seeing him was extreme. It had been so long since she had met a friend, or seen any one to laugh and chat with; and then he reminded her of that delightful visit, that one oasis in the dark desert of her life! She greeted him with unalloyed pleasure, and asked a thousand questions about her friends in B—.

Stanley was a reserved man, remarkably cold and grave in his manners. There were few indeed who knew him, few to whom he ever relaxed from that stern, immovable manner; and now as he spoke to her, no answering pleasure shone in that cold, grey eye; but then there was a something in his manner, something kind yet grave, which made Isabelle's heart beat quicker. She walked home and appeared as usual, but her heart was in a wild tumult, she knew not why, and cared not to analyze the feeling. She had certainly abandoned all idea of ever meeting Stanley again when she left B—, and though the idea gave her pain, no dream of marriage with him had ever entered her mind. Yet she had not, never could, *forget* him.

Week after week passed away, and Stanley came again and again. Isabelle soon learned to love him with all the intensity, the adoration of a woman's first love. The love of an isolated heart which none *had ever*; none *could ever* share. His was the first voice which had waked an answering echo in her bosom, the first whose tones her heart had bounded to hear.

Well, they were married. He took her to his home, a large farm in an adjoining county; and Isabelle thought life had smiled on her at last. Her husband loved her sincerely, and if the truest, tenderest devotion on her part could have made them happy, Isabelle would have been so; but there are very many causes, unseen by the world, which operate to disturb happiness. Many a canker lies deep in the heart of a tree, never suspected until the leaves fade, and the boughs die one after another; and then the stump is rooted up and the cause at last discovered, but what avails it? Isabelle sought to make her home happy and cheerful, but she soon discovered that Stanley did not like society, nor gaiety of any kind. Had she not loved so blindly, she might have found that out before. He did not like conversation. He liked to sit and brood over some fancied sorrow, wrap himself in what he considered a "pleasing melancholy," and allow the world around him to pursue its own way, so it let him alone. Sometimes he would absent himself for days together, when called to the city to attend to indispensable business. He never took Isabelle with him on these occasions. He thought little of the young and gentle heart

which looked to him as to the "god of its idolatry," and measured all her humors and every thought by his wayward moods. His eyes were her only mirror, and assiduously did she consult them to know if her attire pleased him or was becoming: vain hope, he never looked nor cared. The tones of his voice, the expression of his face was the only gage by which she weighed every look, word, and action. But *He* who had redeemed her would not permit such idolatry as this, therefore was it turned into gall and bitterness, *He* was leading her by a way which she knew not to the fountains of light and life.

As Stanley did not like society, Isabelle cheerfully relinquished it, and devoted herself to him alone. How many lonely hours was she condemned to, while he was absent or shut up in his study, where he did not permit her to intrude on him. Her sensitive heart would often torment itself with a thousand fears of what was filling her husband's mind. Sometimes she imagined he was regretting his marriage with herself, because it brought no worldly advantage with it. Then again she would fancy he was dissatisfied with something she had done or said, and for hours she would sit, retracing every word and action of her own during the time he had been with her, and wondering which of them it was that had displeased him. Could she but have known he thought not of her, but only of himself, it would hardly have made her happier. But when he was once more by her side, one kind word or smile would make her supremely happy, and she thought of nothing, asked for nothing else. The many peculiarities in her position did not strike her as they would have done most women in the same situation. Accustomed to seeing her mother treated as an inferior, and denied all those privileges usually accorded to a wife and the mother of a family, her own want of many advantages she might justly have claimed as the wife of a man of family and fortune, did not occur to her mind, and when alluded to by others only wounded her feelings, as she considered them a reflection on her beloved Stanley.

There are always plenty of officious friends in this world to tell us what we ought to have. Indeed I think our friends generally know what we "ought to have," and what our circumstances are, much better than we do ourselves.

So passed a few years, and the smiles of a little daughter brightened the home of Isabelle Stanley. Her husband had wished for a son, but he seemed so happy when his little daughter was laid in his arms, that Isabelle did not regret the disappointment so much as she had feared. "And now," thought she, "we will be happier. This new tie must draw us more together, and he will surely love me the better." Vain, foolish

thought. He loved her already as much as she could love, but he *could* not love her as well as he did *himself*.

Isabelle recovered very slowly. The child was a lovely likeness of himself, and when she saw the fond father smiling on the prattling cherub by her side, no thought of self intervened to break the spell of perfect happiness thrown around her. Stanley too, absorbed in his child, did not mark the faded cheek, the languid eye, the feeble step. The summer passed away, and another winter came with its piercing blasts and stormy days of snow, and sleet, and rain. Isabelle found herself confined to her chamber; but they thought it only a slight cold, a trifling indisposition. When Stanley could steal a moment from dreamy indolence, or thoughts of worldly aggrandizement, between which his time was wholly passed, he would sit by the side of his wife, and tell her she must cheer up, that the spring would soon come in, and that then they must ride together, and walk together, and that he would take her to the Springs, a promise, by-the-bye, he had no intention of ever keeping. But poor Isabelle felt that this world, with all its pleasures, all its sorrows, was fast fading from before her eyes. Something within her told her it could not be long, that she had little more to suffer in that world which had to her been a short and weary pilgrimage. Still it was hard to resign all hope. To know that we must part with all we love, and be forgotten in that cold, dark grave; to know in a few more months, perhaps days, we shall be hid forever under that green sod, and those loved beings by our side will pass coldly by, without perhaps "one thought, whose relics there recline." Oh, it is hard for the aged and those who have none to care for them, how hard then for the young and lovely mother, who knows and feels she might be beloved. And those tender buds around her which derived their life from hers; if she might only live until they could learn to know and love her as she feels she deserves to be loved.

Spring came. Isabelle grew better, and hope once more revived in her breast. Sometimes better, sometimes worse, she passed feebly through the summer, but the snows of the succeeding February fell on her grave. Before she died she saw a little son laid in his father's arms. Then selfish as Stanley was, he awakened to a sense of her danger. Then he would almost have purchased her life with that of the long coveted son, born to inherit his proudly cherished family name, but then *it was too late*. I know not that any care could have saved her, for when consumption has set its seal upon his victims, I am not one of those who can be brought to believe they can be rescued from his grasp; but if mental

uneasiness can hasten its strides, then surely the life of Isabelle might have been greatly prolonged. She held her husband's hand until the chill of death loosened her hold. Her last words were to him, her last look one of love. It was a bitter pang to part from her little Mildred, and many a tear the suffering mother shed over that fair head as she thought of her own melancholy childhood, and prayed that her child's might not resemble hers. Once as her husband sat by her, she could not help saying, "oh, Stanley, dear Stanley, will you not sometimes remember this dear child may want something beyond food and clothing? She will be young and gay, and will have no mother to think and plead for her. She will want sympathy, consideration for her feelings. She will want society, amusement." Isabelle could get no further. Exhausted with emotion, which the sad retrospect of her own cheerless life excited as much as the sight of her innocent child, she sank almost fainting, and Stanley promised. Poor Isabelle gave one bitter sigh, she was accustomed to his promises. Yet he was sincere. And as he looked at his lovely unconscious children, he promised to himself to be all that man could be to them; but he did not know himself. He had not learned even the first rudiments of self-knowledge.

For a few weeks after following poor Isabelle to her last resting-place he watched over his children most anxiously, then gradually other things attracted his attention. First his pride bade him erect a splendid monument to the memory of Isabelle, wife of the "Hon. Henry Stanley," and then followed an eulogium, containing a list of virtues which the poor, humble Isabelle would have been truly thankful, truly grateful could she at any time in her life have known he attributed to her, for Stanley never praised. Could poor Isabelle have known when she first saw him, that this very trait she so much admired in him, the absence of all disposition to flatter or compliment, which in her eyes so distinguished him from the common herd, was but another phase of the deep selfishness of the heart of man, much of her sorrow and suffering might have been spared. But she is now at rest. There in that quiet country church-yard a beautiful willow waves over her tomb, and the hands of her little children often strew flowers on the green turf around.

Two years after, Stanley led another bride to that church, a proud and haughty woman, who neither thought of his feelings, nor cared for them. She asked for what she chose, and when she did not find her wishes gratified, procured it herself. She was not unkind to her step-children, for she did not trouble herself very much about them. Her own children occupied much

of her time and attention, and her own precious ; the heart of man. To him who hath much he
self still more ; and Stanley loved and admired ; will give more, but to those who have not, will
her more than he had done Isabelle, for such is ; he take away even that which he hath.

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JULIA WARREN.

A SEQUEL TO PALACES AND PRISONS.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

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CHAPTER X.

ADELINE LEICESTER had scarcely gained her apartment, when Jacob Strong entered it. He came in with a tread so heavy that it made itself heard even through the turf-like swell of the carpet. She looked up at him wearily, yet with surprise. Jacob, so phlegmatic, so sturdy in all other cases, never was self-possessed with his mistress; one glance of those beautiful eyes, one wave of that soft hand was enough to confuse his brain, and make the strong heart flutter in his bosom like the wings of a wild bird.

"Madam," he stammered, shifting his huge feet unsteadily to and fro on the carpet, "there is a woman below who wants to see you."

"I can see no one this morning; send her away!"

"I tried that, madam, but she answers that her business is important, and in short that she *will* see you."

Adeline opened her eyes wide, and half turned in her chair: this insolent message aroused her somewhat.

"Indeed, what does she look like? Who can it be?"

"She is a very common-looking person, handsome enough, but unpleasant."

"You never saw her before then?"

"No, never!"

"Let her come up, I cannot well give the next ten minutes to anything more miserable than myself," said Adeline: "let her come up!"

Jacob left the room, and Adeline, aroused to some little interest in the person who had so peremptorily demanded admission to her presence, threw off something of her languor as she saw the door swing open to admit her singular guest.

A woman entered with a haughty, almost rude air, her dress was clean, but of cheap material, and put on with an effort at tidiness, as if in correction of some long-acquired habits of carelessness which she had found it difficult to fling off. A black hood lined with faded crimson silk, was thrown back from her face, revealing large

Roman features, fierce dark eyes, and a mouth, that in its heavy fullness struck the beholder more unpleasantly even than the ferocious brightness of those large eyes.

This woman looked around her as she entered the dressing-room, and a faint sneer curled her lip as she took in, with a contemptuous glance, all the elegant luxury of that little room. Adeline would not for an instant have dreamed of inviting a creature so unprepossessing to sit down in the room so exquisitely fitted up for her own enjoyment; but the woman waited for no indication of the kind. She cast one keen glance on the surprised and somewhat startled face turned upon her as she entered, another around the room which contained only two chairs beside the one occupied by its mistress, and seizing one, a frail thing of carved ebony cushioned with the most delicate embroidery on white satin, she took possession of it.

At another time Adeline would have rung the bell and ordered the woman to be put from the room—but now there was a sort of fascination in this audacious coolness that aroused a reckless feeling in her own heart. She allowed the woman to seat herself, therefore, without a word, nay, a slight smile quivered about her lip as she heard the fragile ebony crack, as if about to give way beneath the heavy burden cast so roughly upon it.

The strange being sat in silence for some moments, examining Adeline with a bold, searching glance, that, spite of herself, brought the blood to that haughty woman's cheek. After her fierce black eyes had roved up and down two or three times from the pretty lace cap to the embroidered slipper, that began to beat somewhat angrily against the cushion which it had before so languidly pressed, the woman at last condescended to speak.

"You are rich, madam, people say so, and all this looks like it. They say, too, that you are generous, good to the poor, that you give away money by handfuls. I want a little of this money!"

Adeline looked hard at the woman, who returned the glance almost fiercely.

"You need not search my face so sharply," she said; "I don't want the money for myself. One gets along on a little in New York, and I can always have that little without begging of rich women. I would scrub anybody's kitchen floor from morning till night, rather than ask you or any other proud aristocrat for a red cent! It isn't for myself I've come, but for a fellow prisoner, or rather one that was a fellow prisoner, for I'm out of the cage just now. It's for an old man I want the money, a good old man that the night-hawks have taken up for murder." Adeline started, but the woman did not observe it, and went on with increasing warmth. "The old fellow is a saint on earth—a holy saint, if such things ever are. I know what crime is. I can find guilt in a man's eye, let it be buried back ever so deep; but this old man is not guilty, a summer morning is not more serene than his face! Men who murder from malice or accident do not sit so peacefully in their cells, with that sort of prayerful tenderness brooding over the countenance."

"Of whom are you speaking, woman? Who is this old man?" demanded Adeline, sharply. "What is his innocence or his guilt to me?"

"What is his innocence or guilt to you? Are you a woman?—have you a heart and ask that question? As for me I *might* ask it—I who know what crime is, and who should feel most for the criminal! But you, pampered in wealth, beautiful, loving, worshipped, who never had even a temptation to sin—it is for you to feel for a man unjustly accused, the innocent for the innocent—the guilty for the guilty. Sympathy should run thus if it does not!"

"This is an outrage, mockery!" said Adeline, starting from her chair. "Who sent you here, woman?—how dare you talk to me of these things?—I know nothing of the old man you are raving about: wish to know less. If you want money say so, but do not talk of him, of crime, of—of murder!"

She sank back to her chair again, pale and breathing heavily. Her strange visitor stood up, evidently surprised by a degree of agitation that seemed to her without adequate cause.

"So the rich can feel," she said, "but this is not compassion. My presence annoys you—the close mention of sin makes you shudder. You look, yes, you do look like that angel child when I first laid my hand upon her shoulder."

"What child?—of whom do you speak?" questioned Adeline, faintly, for the woman was bending over her, and she was fascinated by the power of those wild eyes.

"It is the grandchild of that old man—the old

murderer they call him—the old saint I call him, it is his grandchild that your look reminded me of a moment ago: it is gone now, but I shall always love you for having seemed like her only for a minute!"

"Her name, what is her name?" cried Adeline, impelled to the question by some intuitive impulse that she neither comprehended nor cared to conceal. "What is the child's name, I say?"

"Julia—Julia Warren."

"A fair, gentle girl, with an eye that seems to crave affection as violets open their leaves for the dew when they are thirsty; a frail, delicate little creature toiling under a burden of flowers! I have seen a young creature like this more than once. She haunts me—her name itself haunts me—and why, why! she is nothing to me—I am nothing to her?"

Adeline spoke in low tones communing with herself; and the woman looked on, wondering at the words as they dropped so unconsciously from those beautiful lips.

"It is the same girl, I am sure of it," said the woman, at last. "She had no flowers when I saw her tottering with her poor wet eyes into the prison, but her sweet face might have been bathed in nothing but their perfume it was so full of sweetness. It was so—so holy I was near saying, but the word is a strange one for me. Well, madam, this young girl has been in prison with me, and the like of me!"

"She must come out, she shall not remain there an hour!" said Adeline, searching eagerly among the folds of her dress for a purse which was not to be found. "It is not here, I will ring for Jacob, you want money to get this young girl out of prison, that is kind, very kind, you shall have it: oh, heavens! the thought suffocates me—that angel child—that beautiful flower spirit in prison! Woman, why did you not come to me before?"

"I was in prison myself—the officers don't let us out so easily. We are not exactly expected to make calls besides. How should I know any thing about you, except as one of those proud women who gather up their silken garments when we come near, as if it were contagion to breathe the same atmosphere with us."

"But how is it that you come to me at last?"

"She told me about you!"

"*She* sent you to me then?" questioned Adeline, with sparkling eyes; "bless her, she sent you!"

"No, she told me about you. I come of my own accord."

Adeline's countenance fell: she was silent for a moment, subdued by a strange feeling of disappointment.

"But she is in that horrid place; no matter

how you came, not another hour must she remain in prison if money or influence can release her."

"But she is not in prison now!" said the woman.

"Not in prison!—how is this? What can you desire of me if she is not in prison?"

"But her grandfather—the good old man, he is in prison helpless as a babe—innocent as a babe. It is the old man who is in prison now."

"Why am I tormented with this old man? Do not mention him to me again, his crime is fearful; I am not the one to save him, the murderer of—of—"

"He is the young girl's grandfather!"

Adeline had started from her chair, and was pacing rapidly up and down the room, her arms folded tightly under the loose sleeves of her dressing-gown, and the silken tassels swaying to and fro with the impetuosity of her movements. There seemed to be a venomous fascination in that old man's name that stung her whole being into action. She had not comprehended before that it was connected with that of the flower girl, but the words "he is the young girl's grandfather!" arrested her like the shaft from a bow. Her lips grew white, she stood motionless gazing almost fiercely upon the woman who had uttered these words.

"That girl the grandchild of Edward Leicester's murderer!" she exclaimed. "Why the very flowers I tread on turn to serpents-beneath my feet!"

"The old man did not kill this Leicester," answered the woman, and her rude face grew white also; "or if he did, it was but as the instrument of God's vengeance on a monster—a hideous, vile monster, who crawled over every thing good in his way, crushing it as he went. If he *had* killed him—if I believed it, no Catholic saint was ever idolized as I would worship that old man!"

"Woman, woman, what had Leicester ever done to you that you should thus revile him in his grave?"

A cloud of inexplicable passion swept over the woman's face. She drew close to Adeline, and as she answered, her breath, feverish with the dregs of intoxication, and laden with words that stung like reptiles, sickened the wretched woman to the heart's core. She had no strength to check the fierce torrent that rushed over her, but folded her white arms closer and closer over her heart, as if to shield it somewhat from the storm of bitter eloquence her question had provoked.

"What has Leicester done to me?" said the woman. "Look, look at me, I am his work from head to foot, body and soul, all of his fashioning!"

"How? Did *you* love him also?"

A glow of fierce disgust broke over the woman's features, gleaming in her eye and curling her lip.

"Love him, I never sank so low as that; he scarcely touched the froth upon my heart, the wine below was not for him. Had I loved him, he might have been content with my ruin only, as it was, madam, madam, it is a short story, very short, you shall have it—but I'll have drink after."

"Compose yourself, do not be so violent," said Adeline, shrinking from the storm she had raised with that sensitiveness which makes the wounded bird shield its bosom from a threatened arrow. "I do not wish to give you pain!"

"Pain!" exclaimed the woman, with a wild sneer, "I am beyond that. No one need know pain while the drug stores are open! You ask what Leicester has ever done to me—you knew him, perhaps—no matter, you are not the first woman whose face has lost its color at the sound of his name; but he will do no more mischief, the blood is wrung from his heart now."

Adeline sunk back in her chair, holding up both hands with the palms outward, as if warding off a blow. But the woman had become fierce in her passion, and would not be checked.

"You ask if I loved him, I who worshipped my own husband, my noble, beautiful, young husband with a worship strong as death, holy as religion. Leicester, this fiend, who is now doing a fiend's penance in torment—this demon was my husband's friend, he was my friend too, for I loved everything that brightened the eye, or brought smiles to the lip of my husband—a husband whom I worshipped as a devotee lavishes homage on a saint—loved as a woman loves when her whole life is centered in one object. I was never good like him—but I loved him—I loved him! You look at me in astonishment—you cannot understand the love that turns to such fierce madness when it is but a past thing—that drugs itself with opium, drowns itself in brandy!"

Adeline answered with a faint sob, and her eyes grew wild as the great black orbs flashing upon her. The woman saw this, and took compassion on what she believed to be purely terror at her own violence. She made a strong effort and spoke more calmly, but still with a suppressed, husky voice that was like the hush of a storm.

"We were poor, madam. I kept a little school, my husband was a clerk, at very low pay, with very hard labor. It was a toilsome life, but oh how happy we were! I don't know where James first saw Mr. Leicester, but they came home together one evening, and I remember we had a little supper, with wine and some game that Leicester had ordered on the way. If you have never seen that man, nothing can convey to you

the power, the fascination of his presence. Soft, persuasive, gentle as an angel in seeming: deep, crafty, cruel as a fiend in reality—if you had a foible or a weakness he was sure to detect it with a glance, and sure to use it, though it might be to your own destruction. I was young, vain, new to the world, and not altogether without beauty. I doubt if Leicester ever saw a woman without calculating her weaknesses, and playing upon them if it were only for mere amusement, or in the wanton test of his own diabolical powers.

"I was strong, for heart and soul I loved my husband; he saw this and it provoked his pride, else in my humility I might have escaped his pursuit, but I was vain, capricious, passionate. A little time he obtained some influence over me, for his subtle flattery, his artful play upon every bad feeling of my nature had its effect. But the woman who loves one man with her whole strength has a firm anchorage. My vanity was gratified by this man's homage, nothing more—still he attained all that he worked for, a firmer influence over my husband. Had I been his enemy he could not have wormed himself around that simple, honest nature. I helped him, I was a dupe, a tool, used for the ruin of my own husband. It is this thought that brandy is not strong enough to drown, or morphine to kill!

"He was our benefactor—you understand—without himself directly appearing in the business except to us upon whom his agency was impressed, a place, with much higher salary, was procured for my husband. We were very grateful, and looked upon Leicester as a guardian angel. Very well—a few months went on, still binding us closer to the man who had benefited us so much. One day he stood by my husband's desk. It was a rich firm that he served, and James had charge of the funds. It was just before the hour of deposit, ten thousand dollars lay beneath the bank-book. Leicester seemed in haste; he had need of a large sum of money that day, which he could easily re-place in the morning, five thousand, something had gone wrong in his financial matters, and he proposed that James should lend that sum from the amount before him.

"My husband hesitated, and at length refused. Leicester did not urge it, but went away apparently grieved. By that time it was too late for the bank, and James brought the money home, thinking to deposit it early the next day. Leicester came in while we were at dinner, he looked sad and greatly distressed. I insisted upon knowing the cause, and at last he told me of his embarrassment, dwelling with gentle reproach on the refusal of my husband to aid him. I was never a woman of firm principle, the holiest feeling known to me was the love I bore my

husband, all else was passion, impulse, generous or unjust as circumstances warranted. I did not understand the rectitude of my husband's conduct. To me it seemed ingratitude, my influence over him was fatal. When Leicester left the house five thousand dollars—not ours nor his—went with him.

"The next day we did not see him. My poor husband grew nervous, but it was not till a week had passed that I could force myself to believe that the money would not be promptly re-paid. Then James inquired for Leicester at his hotel. He had gone south.

"My husband had embezzled his employers' money. He was tried, found guilty, sentenced to the states' prison for seven years. I—I had done it! When he went up to Sing Sing, linked wrist to wrist with a band of the lowest felons, I followed to the wharf, and my little boy, his child and mine, only a few weeks old, lay crying against my bosom. I watched the boat through the burning tears that seemed to search my eyes, and when it was lost I turned away still as the grave, but the most desolate wretch that ever trod the earth. Seven years, it was an eternity to me! I had no moral strength—I was mad. But his child was there, and I struggled for that!"

The woman paused. Her voice, full of rude strength before, grew soft with mournful desolation.

"I went often to see him; I struggled for a pardon, it was his first offence, but he must stay a year or two in prison, there was no hope before then—I have told you how innocent he really was. But a sense of shame, the hard fare, the toil, he drooped under these things! Every visit I found him thinner; his smile more sad; his brow more pallid. One day I went to see him with the child, and they told me to go home, for my husband was dead. I went home quietly as a lamb that has been numbed by the frost. That night I drank laudanum, intending to be nearer my husband before morning, but there was not enough. It threw me into a sleep, profound as death, except that I could not find him in it. The potion did not kill, but it taught me where to seek for relief, how to chain sleep. It was my slave then, we have changed places since."

Adeline sat cowering in her chair while the woman went on with her narrative. It seemed as if she herself were the person who had inflicted the great wrong to which she had listened, as if the fierce anger, the just reproaches of that woman were leveled at her own conscience.

"What atonement can be made? What can be done for you?" she faltered, weaving her pale fingers together, and lifting her eyes beseechingly to the woman's face, which was bent down and haggard with exhausted anguish.

"What atonement can be made?" cried the woman, throwing back her head till the crimson hood fell half away from her black tresses. "He is making atonement now—now—ha! ha!"

The laugh which followed this speech made Adeline cower as if a mortal hand had fallen upon her heart. She looked piteously at the woman, and after a faint struggle to speak, fell back in her chair quite insensible.

This utter prostration, this deathly helplessness touched the still living heart of the woman. She could not understand why her terrible story had taken such effect upon a person, lifted as it seemed so far above all sympathy for one of her wretched cast, but she was a woman, had suffered and could still feel for the sufferings of others. A gush of gentle compassion broke up through the blackness and rubbish which had almost choked up the pure waters of her heart, harmonizing her countenance, and awaking her womanhood once more.

She stole into the bed-chamber, and taking a crystal flask full of water from a marble slab, dashed a portion of its contents over the pale face still lying so deathly white against the damask cushions.

This, however, had no effect. She now took the cold hands in her's, chafing them tenderly, removed the dainty cap and scattered water-drops over the pale lips and forehead. With a degree of tact that no one would have expected from her, she refrained from calling the household, and continued her own efforts till life came slowly back to the bosom that a moment before seemed as marble.

Adeline opened her eyes languidly, and closed them again with a shudder when she saw the woman bending over her.

"Go!" she said, still pressing her long eyelashes together; "leave word where you live, and I will send you money."

"For the old man?"

"No; for yourself, not for *his* murderer!"

"I did not ask money for myself," answered the woman, sullenly. "If you give it, I shall pay the lawyers to save him!"

"Then go, I have nothing for you or him—go," answered Adeline, faintly, but in a voice that admitted no dispute; and, rising from her chair, she went into the bed-room and closed the door.

The woman looked after her with some anger and more astonishment; then drawing down her hood she tied it deliberately, and strode into the boudoir, down the stairs, and so out of the house without deigning to notice the servants, who took no pains to conceal their astonishment that a creature of her appearance should be admitted to the presence of their mistress.

Mrs. GRAY found more difficulty in performing her benevolent intentions with regard to the Warrens than she had ever before encountered. Ignorant as a child of all legal proceedings, she found no aid either in the old prisoner, his wife, or his grandchild, who were more uninformed and far less hopeful than herself. Her brother Jacob, on whom she had depended for aid and counsel, much to her surprise not only refused to take any responsibility in her kind efforts, but looked coldly upon the whole affair.

It was not in Jacob Strong's nature to shrink from a kind action; for his rude exterior covered a heart true and warm as ever beat, but the part he had already taken in those events that led to Edward Leicester's death, the almost insane fear that haunted his mistress lest the murderer should escape punishment, the taunts that had wrung his strong heart to the core, but which she had so ruthlessly heaped upon him, all these things conspired in rendering him more than indifferent to the fate of a man whom he had never seen, and whom he wished to find guilty. He received his good sister's entreaties for counsel, therefore, with reproof, and a stern admonition not to meddle with affairs beyond her knowledge.

Thus thrown upon her own resources, the good woman, by no means daunted, resolved to conduct the affair after her own fashion. Robert, it is true, had volunteered to aid her, and had already applied to an eminent lawyer to conduct old Mr. Warren's defence, but the retainer demanded, and the large sum of money expected, when laid before the good huckster woman, quite horrified her. The amount seemed enormous to one who had gathered up a fortune in pennies and shillings. She had heard of the extortions of legal gentlemen, of their rapacity and heartlessness, and resolved to convince them that one woman, at least, had her wisdom teeth in excellent condition.

So Mrs. Gray quietly refused all aid from Robert, and went into the legal market as she would have boarded a North River craft laden with poultry and vegetables. Many a grave lawyer did she astonish by her shrewd efforts to strike a bargain for the amount of eloquence necessary to save her old friend. Again and again did her double chin quiver with indignation at the hard-heartedness and rapacity of the profession.

Thus time wore on, the day of trial approached, and with all her good intentions Mrs. Gray had only done a great deal of talking, which by no means promised to regenerate the legal profession, and the prisoner was still without better counsel than herself.

One day, the good huckster woman was

passing down the steps of the City Prison, for she was invariably accompanied Mrs. Warren to her husband's cell every morning, though it interfered greatly with her harvest hour in the market. She was slowly descending the prison steps, as I have said, when a man whom she had passed leaning gloomily against one of the pillars in the vestibule, followed and addressed her.

On hearing her name pronounced, Mrs. Gray turned and encountered a man, perhaps thirty-five or forty years of age, with fine but unhealthy features, and eyes, black and keen, that seemed capable of reading your soul at a glance, but too weary with study or dissipation for the effort.

"I beg your pardon," said the stranger, lifting his hat with a degree of graceful deference that quite charmed the old lady. "I believe you are Mrs. Gray, the benevolent friend of that poor man lodged up yonder on a charge of murder. My young man informed me that a lady, it must have been you, none other could have so beautifully answered the description, had called at my office in search of counsel. I regretted so much not being in. This is a peculiar case, madam, one that enlists all the sympathies. You look surprised—I know that feeling is not usual in our profession, but there are hearts, madam—hearts so tender originally that they resist the hard grindstone of the law. It is this that has kept me poor, when my brother lawyers are all growing rich around me."

"Sir," answered Mrs. Gray—her face all in a glow of delight—reaching forth her plump hand with which she grasped and shook that of her new acquaintance, which certainly trembled in her grasp, but from other causes than the sympathy for which she gave him credit. "Sir, I am happy to see you—very happy to find one lawyer that has a heart. I don't remember calling at your office without finding you in, though I certainly have found a good many other lawyers out."

Here the blessed old lady gave a mellow chuckle over what she considered a marvelous play upon words, which was echoed by the lawyer, who held one hand to his side, as if absolutely compelled thus to restrain the mirth excited by her facetiousness.

"And now, my dear lady, let us to business. The most exquisite wit, you know, must give place to the calls of humanity. My young man informed me of your noble intentions with regard to this unhappy prisoner. That out of your wealth so honorably won, you were determined to wrest justice from the law. I am here with my legal armor on ready to aid in the good cause. If I were rich now—if I had not exhausted my life in attempting to aid humanity, nothing would give me so much pleasure as to go hand-in-hand

to his rescue without money and without price; as it is, my dear madam—as it is 'the laborer is worthy of his hire.'"

This quotation quite won the already vacillating heart of poor Mrs. Gray. She shook the lawyer's thin hand again with increased cordiality, and answered,

"True enough—true enough, my dear sir. I declare it is refreshing to hear Bible words in the mouth of a lawyer. It's what I didn't expect."

"Ah, madam," cried the lawyer, drawing a white handkerchief from a side pocket, and returning it as if he had determined to suppress his emotions at any cost—"ah, madam, do not apply a general rule too closely. Our profession is bad enough, I do not defend it. What man with a conscience void of offence could make the attempt? But there exist exceptions—honorable exceptions. Permit me to hope that your clear mind can distinguish between the sharper and the man who sacrifices the world's goods for conscience sake. Believe me, dear lady, there are such things as honest lawyers, as pious men in the profession!"

"Well, I must say the idea never struck me before," answered Mrs. Gray, with honest simplicity.

"Permit me to hope that from this hour you will no longer doubt it," answered the lawyer, gently passing one hand over the place which anatomists allot to the human heart. "And now, madam, suppose we walk to my office and settle the preliminaries of our engagement. A cool head and warm heart, that is what you want; fortunately such things may be found. Pray allow me to help you, the steps are a little damp, accidents frequently happen up this avenue; my office is close at hand; many a poor unfortunate has learned to bless the way there—take my arm!"

Mrs. Gray hesitated, a blush swept over her comely cheek at the thought of walking arm-in-arm with so perfect a gentleman, and that in the open streets of New York. It was a thing she had not dreamed of since the death of poor Mr. Gray. But there was a lever of feminine vanity still left in the good woman's nature. The shrewd swindler who stood there so gracefully presenting his arm, had not altogether miscalculated the effect of his flattery, and he clenched it adroitly with this act of personal attention.

Mrs. Gray hesitated, blushed, drew on her glove a little tighter, and then placed her substantial arm through the comparatively fragile limb of the lawyer, softly as if she quite appreciated the danger of bearing him down with her weight. Thus the blessed old woman was borne along, sweeping half the pavement with her massive person, and crowding the poor lawyer

unconsciously out to the curb-stone every other minute.

He, exemplary man, bore it all with gentle complacency, cautioned her against every little impediment that came in her way, and consoled himself for the somewhat remarkable figure he made in the eyes of the police-officers that haunt that neighborhood, by a significant twirl of his disengaged hand in the direction of his own face, and a quick drooping of the left eye-lid, by which they all understood that the Tombs lawyer had brought down his game handsomely that morning.

Mrs. Gray was certainly somewhat disappointed in the style of the lawyer's office into which she was ushered with so much ceremony. A rusty old leathern chair; a table with the green baize half worn off, with a bundle or two of dusty papers upon it; a standish full of dry ink, and a steel pen rusted down to the nib, all veiled thickly with dust, did not entirely meet her ideas of the prosperous business she had anticipated. The lawyer saw this, and hastened to sweep away all unfavorable impressions from her mind.

"This is my work-shop, you see, madam, the tread-mill in which I grind out my humble bread and my blessed charities, no foppery, no carpets, nothing but the barest necessities of the profession. I leave easy-chairs, &c., for those who have the conscience to wring them from needy clients. You comprehend, dear lady. Oh! it is pleasant to feel that now and then in this cold world a good life meets with appreciation. John, bring me another chair!"

"My young man," whom the lawyer had mentioned so ostentatiously, came forward in the shape of a lank Irish lad, taller than his master by three inches, which might be accurately measured by the space visible between the knee of his nether garments and the top of his gaiter boots. The closet door from which he issued revealed a lurking encampment of dusty bottles, a broken washstand, and two enormous demi-johns,

the wicker-work suspiciously moist, and with a stopper of blue glass chained to the neck.

The lawyer made a quiet motion with his hand, which sent the Irish boy in haste to close the door. Then taking the unstable chair which the lad had disinterred from the closet, he sat down cautiously as a cat steals to the lap of her mistress whose temper is somewhat doubtful, and glided into the business on hand. The Irish boy stood meekly by, profiting by the scene with a knowing look, which deepened into a grin of delight as he saw Mrs. Gray draw forth her pocket-book, and place bank-notes of considerable amount into the lawyer's hand. When the good woman had thus deposited half the sum which the lawyer assured her would save old Mr. Warren's life, she arose with a sigh of profound satisfaction, shook out her voluminous skirts, and left the office fully satisfied with the whole transaction.

The lawyer and "his man" followed her to the door. When she had disappeared down the street, the lawyer turned briskly, and in the joy of his heart seized the Irish boy by the collar that had lately graced his own neck, and gave him a vigorous shake. "What are you grinning at, you dog? How dare you laugh at my clients? There now, get along; take that and fill both the demi-johns; buy a clean pack of cards, and a new supply of everything. Do you hear?"

The Irish boy shook himself back into his coat, and seizing the money plunged into the street, resolved not to return a shilling of change without first securing the month's wages, for which his master was, as usual, in arrears.

The lawyer threw himself into the leathern chair which Mrs. Gray had just left, stretched forth his limbs, half closed his eyes, and rubbing his palms softly together, sat thus full ten minutes caressing himself, and chuckling over the morning's business.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

JULIA WARREN.

A SEQUEL TO PALACES AND PRISONS.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

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CHAPTER XI.

If those who think that happiness exists only in those external circumstances that surround a man, could have seen old Mr. Warren in his prison they would have been astonished at the placidity of his countenance, at the calm and holy atmosphere that had made his cell emphatically a home. His wife and grandchild haunted it with their love, and it seemed to him, so the old man said, that God had never been quite so near to him as since he entered these gloomy walls. He might die, the laws might sacrifice him, innocent as he was, but should this happen, he only knew that God permitted it for some wise purpose, that he might never know till the sacrifice was made.

True, life was sweet to the old man, for in his poverty and his trouble two souls had clung to him with a degree of love that would have made existence precious to any one—all that earth knows of heaven, strong, pure affection had always followed him. It is only when the soul looks back upon a waste of buried affection, a maze of broken ties, that it thirsts to die. Resignation is known to every good Christian, but the wild desire which makes men plunge madly toward eternity, comes of exhausted affections and an insane use of life. Good and wise men are seldom eager for death. They wait for it with a still, solemn trust in God, whose most august messenger it is.

There was nothing of bravado in the old man's heart: he made no theatrical exhibition of the solemn faith that was in him; but when visitors passed the open door of his cell—for being upon the third corridor there was little chance of escape—and saw him sitting there with that meek old woman at his feet, and an open Bible on his lap, a huge, worn book that had been his father's, they paused involuntarily with that intuitive homage which goodness always wins even from prejudice.

A few comforts had been added to his prison furniture, for Mrs. Gray was always bringing some cherished thing from her household stores.

A breadth of carpet lay before the bed; a swing shelf hung against the wall, upon which two cups and saucers of Mrs. Gray's most antique and precious china stood in rich relief; while a pot of roses struggled into bloom beneath the light which came through the narrow loop-hole cut through the deep, outer wall. Altogether that prison-cell had a home-like and pleasant look. The old man believed that it might prove the gate to death, but he was not one to turn gloomily from the humble flowers with which God scattered his way to the grave. He lifted his eyes gratefully to every sunbeam that came through the wall, and when darkness surrounded him, and that blessed old woman was forced to leave him alone, he would sit down upon his bed and murmur to himself, "oh! it is well God can hear in the dark!"

Thus, as I have said, the time of trial drew near. The prisoner was prepared and tranquil. The wife and grandchild were convinced of his innocence, and full of gentle faith that the laws could never put a guiltless man to death. Thus they partook somewhat of his own heavenly composure. Mrs. Gray was always ready to cheer them with her genial hopefulness; and Robert Otis was prompt at all times with such aid as his youth, his strength, and his fine, generous nature enabled him to give.

One morning, just after Mrs. Gray had left the cell—for she made a point of accompanying the timid old woman to the prison of her husband—Mr. Warren was disturbed by a visitor that he had never seen before. It was a quiet, demure sort of personage, clothed in black, and with an air half-clerical, half-dissipated, that mingled rather incongruously upon his person. He sat down by the prisoner, as a hired nurse might cajole a child into taking medicine, and after uttering a soft good-morning with his palm laid gently on the withered hand of the old man, he took a survey of the cell. Mrs. Warren stood in one corner, filling the old china cup from which her husband had just taken his breakfast, with water; two or three flowers, gathered from the

plants in Mrs. Gray's parlor windows, lay on the little table, whose gentle bloom this water was to keep fresh. To another man it might have been pleasant to observe with what care this old woman arranged the tints, and turned the cup that its brightest side might come opposite her husband. But the lawyer only saw that she was a woman, and reflected that the sex might always be found useful if properly managed. Instead of being struck by the womanly sweetness of her character, and the affection so beautifully proved by her occupation, he began instantly to calculate upon the uses of which she might be capable.

"Rather a snug box this that they have got you in, my good friend," said the lawyer, turning his eyes with a sidelong glance on the old man's face, and keeping them fixed more steadily than was usual with him, for it was seldom a face like this met his scrutiny within the walls of a prison. "Trust that we shall get you out soon. Couldn't be in better hands, that fine old friend of yours, a woman in a thousand, isn't she? Confides you to my legal keeping entirely!"

"Did Mrs. Gray send you? Are you the gentleman she spoke to about my case?" inquired the old man, turning his calm eyes on the lawyer, while Mrs. Warren suspended her occupation and crept to the other side of her husband. "She wished me to talk with you, and I am glad you have come!"

"Well, my dear old friend, permit me to call you so—for if the lawyer who saves a man from the gallows isn't his friend, I should like to know who is. When shall we have a little quiet chat together?"

"Now; there will be no better time!"

"But this lady; in such cases one must have perfect confidence. Would she have the goodness just to step out while we talk a little?"

"She is my wife. I have nothing to say which she does not know!" answered the old man, turning an affectionate look upon the grateful eyes lifted with an imploring glance to his face.

"Your wife, ha!" cried the lawyer, rubbing his palms softly together, as was his habit when a gleam of villainy more exquisite than usual dawned upon him. "Perhaps not, we shall see; may want her for a witness! but we can tell better when the case is laid out. Now go on, remember that your lawyer is your physician; must have all the symptoms of a case, all its parts, all its capabilities. Now just consider me as your conscience: not exactly that, because one sometimes cheats conscience, you know—after all there is nothing better, think that I am your lawyer, that I have your life in my hands, that I must know the truth in order to save it—cheat conscience if you like, but never cheat the lawyer

who tries your case, or the doctor who feels your pulse."

"I have nothing to conceal. I am ready to tell you all," answered the old man.

The calmness with which this was said took the lawyer somewhat aback. He had expected that more of his cajoling eloquence would be necessary before his client would be won to speak frankly. His astonishment was greatly increased, therefore, when the old man in his grave and truthful way related everything connected with the death of Edward Leicester exactly as it had happened. Nothing could be more discouraging than this narrative as it presented itself to the lawyer. Had the man been absolutely guilty, his counsel would have found far less difficulty in arranging some grounds of defence: without some opening for legal chicanery the lawyer felt himself lost. Unprincipled as he was, there still existed in his mind some little feeling of interest in any case he undertook, independent of the money to be received. He loved the excitement, the trickery, the manœuvring of a desperate defence. He had a sort of fellow feeling for the clever criminal that sharpened his talent, and sent him into court with the spirit of an old gambler. But a case like this was something new. He did not for a moment doubt the old man's story; there was truth breathing in every word, and written in every line of that honest countenance. Indeed it was this very conviction that dampened the lawyer's ardor in the case. It seemed completely removed from his line of position. He had so long solemnly declared his belief in the innocence of men whom he knew to be steeped in guilt, that he felt how impossible it was for him to utter the truth before a jury with any kind of gravity. His only resource was to make this plain, solemn case as much like a falsehood as possible.

"And so you were entirely alone in the room?"

"Entirely."

The lawyer shook his head.

"You have no witnesses of his coming in, or the conversation, except this old lady and your grandchild?"

"None!"

"Your neighbors, how were you situated there? No kind fellow in the next casement who heard a noise, and looked through the key-hole, ha?"

The old man looked up gravely, but made no answer.

"I tell you," said the lawyer, sharply, for he was nettled by the old man's look, "yours is a desperate case!"

"I believe it is," was the gentle reply.

"A desperate case, to be cured only with desperate measures. Some person must be found who saw this man strike the blow himself."

"But who did see it, save God and myself?"

"Your wife there, she must have seen it. The door was not quite closed; she was curious—women always are; she looked through, saw the man seize the knife; you tried to arrest his hand; he was a strong man; you old and feeble. You saw all this, madam!"

The old woman was stooping forward, her thin fingers had locked themselves together while the lawyer was speaking, and her eyes were fixed on him, dilating like those of a bird when the serpent begins its charm. At first she waved her head very faintly, thus denying that she had witnessed what he described; then she began to lean forward, assenting, as it were, to the force and energy of his words, almost believing that she had actually looked through the door and saw all that the lawyer asserted.

"No, she did not see all this," answered the prisoner, quietly; "and if she had how would it be of use?"

"You did see it, madam!" persisted the lawyer, without removing his eyes from the old woman's face, but fascinating her, as it were, with his gaze—"you did see it!"

"I don't know. I—I, perhaps—yes, I think."

"But you did see it; your husband's life depends on the fact. Refresh your memory; his life, remember—his life!"

"Yes—yes. I—I saw!"

It was not a deliberate falsehood: the weak mind was held and moulded by a strong will. For the moment that old woman absolutely believed that she had witnessed the scene which had been so often impressed upon her fancy. The lawyer saw his power, and a faint smile stole over his lip, half undoing the work his craft had accomplished. The old woman began to shrink slowly back; she met the calm, sorrowful gaze of her husband, and her eyes sunk beneath the reproach it conveyed.

The lawyer saw all this, and without giving her time to retract, went on.

"By remembering this you have saved his life—saved him from the gallows—his name from dishonor—his body from being mangled at the medical college."

The old woman wove her wrinkled fingers together; the kerchief on her bosom quivered with the struggle of her breath.

"I saw it—I saw it all!" she cried, lifting up her clasped hands and dropping them heavily on her lap. "God forgive me, I saw it all!"

"Wife!" said the old man, in a voice so solemn that it made even the lawyer shrink. "Wife!"

She did not answer: her head drooped upon her bosom; these old hands unlocked and fell apart in her lap, but she muttered still, "God forgive me, I saw it all!"

It was a falsehood now, and as she uttered it, the poor creature shrunk guiltily from her husband's side, and attempted to steal out of the cell.

"One moment," said the lawyer, beginning to kindle up in his unholy work. "Another thing is to be settled, and then you have the proud honor, the glorious reflection that it is to you, this good, this innocent man owes his life. How long have you been married?"

The old woman looked at a gold ring on her finger worn almost to a thread, and answered,

"It is near them years."

"Where?"

The old woman looked at her husband, but his eyes were bent sorrowfully downward, giving her neither encouragement or reproach, so she answered with some hesitation,

"We were married down East, in Maine!"

"So much the better. Is the marriage registered anywhere?"

"I don't know!"

"The witnesses, where are they?"

"All dead!"

The lawyer rubbed his hands with still greater energy.

"Very good, very good indeed; nothing could be better! Just tell me, could you prove the thing yourselves?"

"Prove what?" said Mrs. Warren, half in terror, while the prisoner remained motionless, paralyzed, as it seemed, by the wickedness of his wife.

"Prove, why that you were ever married. The truth is, madam, you could not have been married to the prisoner—never were the thing impossible. It spoils you for a witness—do you understand?"

"No," said the old woman—"no, how should I? What does it mean?"

"Mean, you are not his wife!"

"Not his wife—not his wife. Why, didn't I tell you we had lived together above forty years?"

"Certainly; no objection to that, a beautiful reproof to the slander that there is no constancy in woman. Still you are not his wife—remember that!"

"But I *am* his wife. Look up, husband, and tell him if I am not your own lawfully married wife."

"Madam," said the lawyer, in a voice that he intended should reach her heart. "In order to save this man's life you must learn to forget as well as to remember. You saw Leicester kill himself, that is settled. I shall place you on the stand to prove the fact—a fact which saves your husband from the gallows. His *wife* would not be permitted to give this evidence, the laws forbid it—therefore you are not his wife. They cannot

prove that you are; probably you could not easily prove it yourself. I assert, and will maintain it, no marriage ever existed between you and the prisoner."

"But we have lived together forty years: more than forty years!" cried the old woman, and a blush crept slowly over her wrinkled features till it was lost in the soft grey of her hair. "What am I then?"

"What matters a name at your time of life. Besides, the moment he is clear you may prove your marriage before all the courts in America for aught I care; they can't put him on trial a second time."

"And you wish me to deny that we are married—to say that I am not his wife." The old woman, so weak, so frail, grew absolutely stern as she spoke; the blush fled from her face, leaving it almost sublime. The lawyer even felt the moral force of that look, and said half in apology,

"It is the only way to save his life!"

"Then let him die, I could bear it better than to say he is not my husband—I not his wife." She sunk to the floor as she spoke, and bowing her forehead to the old man's knee, sobbed out, "oh, husband—husband, say that I am right—did you hear—did you hear?"

The old man sat upright now. A holy glow came over his face, and his lips parted with a smile that was heavenly in its sweetness. He raised the feeble woman from his feet, and putting the grey hair gently back from her forehead, kissed it with tender reverence. Then holding her head to his bosom, he turned to the lawyer. "You may be satisfied, she does not think her husband's poor life worth that peril," he said. "Now leave us together."

The lawyer went out rebuked and crest-fallen, muttering to himself as he passed from one flight of steps to another, "well, let the stubborn old fellow hang, it will do him good; the prettiest case I ever laid out spoiled for an old woman's fancy. It was badly managed, I should have taken her alone! I verily believe the old wretch is innocent, but they will hang him high as Haman if the woman persists."

CHAPTER XII.

The day of trial came at last. Such cases are frequent in New York, and, unless there is something in the position or history of the criminal to excite public attention, they pass off almost unnoticed. Still there is not a single case that does not sweep with it the very heart-strings of some person or family, linked either to the prisoner or his victim; there is not one that does not wring tears from some eyes and groans from some innocent bosom. We read a brief record of these things; we learn that a murderer has been

tried, convicted, sentenced; we shudder and turn away without being half-conscious that the history thus briefly recorded embraces persons innocent as ourselves, who must endure more than the tortures of death for the sin that one man is doomed to expiate.

Old Mrs. Warren and her granddaughter stood at the prison doors early that morning. It was before the hour when visitors could be admitted, but they wandered up and down in sight of the entrance with that feverish unrest to which keen anxiety subjects one. All was busy life about the neighborhood. It was nothing to the multitude that passed up and down the steps, that a fellow being was that morning to be placed on trial for his life. A few remembered it, but with the exception of old Mrs. Gray and her nephew, it passed heavily upon the heart of no living being save those two helpless females. How strange all this seemed to them! With every thought and feeling occupied, they looked upon the indifferent throng with a pang; the smiling faces, the bustle, the cheerfulness, all seemed mocking the heaviness of their own hearts.

The hour came at last, and they entered the prison. Old Mr. Warren received them affectionately as usual: he exhibited no anxiety, and seemed even more cheerful than he had been for some days. The Bible lay open upon the bed, and there was an indentation near the pillow, as if his arms had rested heavily there while reading upon his knees.

He spent more than an hour conversing gently with his wife and granddaughter, striving to give them consolation rather than hope, for, from the first, he had believed and expressed a belief that the trial would go against him. With no faith in his counsel, and no evidence to sustain his innocence, how could he doubt it? Perhaps this very conviction created that holy composure, which seemed so remarkable in a man just to be placed on a trial of life and death.

When the officers came to conduct him to the City Hall, he followed them calmly, solemnly, as a good man might have gone up to a place of worship. It was a bright, frosty morning, and he had been some weeks in prison. Still his heart must have been wonderfully at ease when the clear air, and the busy life around could thus kindle up his eye and irradiate his face. A crowd gathered around the prison to see the old murderer come forth, but the people were disappointed. Instead of a fierce, haggard being, wild with the terrors of his situation, ready to dart away through any opening like a wild animal from its keepers, they saw only a meek old man, neatly clad, and walking guiltily between the officers with neither the bravado or the abject humility of guilt. The fresh air did him good,

you could see that in his face, and so grateful was he for this little blessing, that he almost forgot the gaze and wonder of the crowd.

"This is very beautiful," he observed, to one of the officers, and the man stared to see how simple and unaffected was this expression of enjoyment. "Had I never been in prison how could I have relished a morning like this?"

"You expect to be acquitted?" answered the man, unable to account for this strange composure in any other way.

"No," replied the old man, a little sadly—"no, I think they will find me guilty—I am almost sure they will!"

"You take it calmly, upon my honor—very calmly!" exclaimed the man. "Have you made up your mind then to plead guilty at once?"

"No; that would be false—they must do it—I will not help them. All in my power I must do to prevent the crime they will commit in condemning me. Not to do that would be suicide!"

There was something in this reply that struck the officer more than a thousand protestations could have done. Indeed the entire bearing of his charge surprised him not a little. Seldom had he conducted a man to trial that walked with with so firm a step, or spoke so calmly.

"Have you no dread of the sentence—no fear of dying, that you speak so quietly?"

The old man turned his head and looked back. Two females were following him a little way off. They had gone across the street to avoid the crowd of men and boys that hung like a pack of hounds about the prisoner, but were gazing after him with anxious faces, that touched even the officer with pity as his eyes fell upon them. The old man saw where his eyes rested, and answered very mournfully,

"Yes, I have a dread of the sentence. It will reach them! Besides, it is a solemn thing to die—a very solemn thing to know that at a certain hour you will stand face to face with God!"

"Still I dare say you would meet death like a hero!"

"When death comes I will try and meet it like a Christian," was the mild answer.

As the old man spoke, they were crossing Chambers street to a corner of the Park, but their progress was checked by a carriage drawn by a pair of superb horses, and mounted by two footmen in livery that dashed by, scattering the crowd in every direction.

Mrs. Warren and her granddaughter were on the opposite side, and had just left Centre street to cross over. Julia uttered a faint scream, and attempted to draw her grandmother back, for the horses were dashing close upon them, and the old woman stood as if paralyzed in the middle of the street. She did not move; the horses plunged

by, and the wheels made her garments flutter with the air they scattered in passing. The old woman uttered a cry as the carriage disappeared, and ran forward a step or two as if impelled by some wild impulse to follow it, Julia darted forward and caught hold of her arm.

"Grandmother—grandmother, where are you going? What is the matter?"

"Did you see that?" said the old woman.

"What, grandmother?"

"That face—the lady in the carriage. Did you see it?"

"No, grandmother, I was looking at you. It seemed as if the horses would trample you down."

The old woman listened evidently without comprehending. Her eyes were wild, and her manner energetic.

"There is your grandfather, I must tell him. It was *her* face!"

"Whose face, grandmother?"

"Whose! Why, did you not see?" The old woman seemed all at once to recollect herself. "But how should you know—you, my poor child, who never had a mother!"

"Oh! grandmother, has trouble driven you wild?" cried the poor girl, struck with new terror, for there was something almost insane in the woman's look.

"No, I am not wild; but it was *her*—see how I tremble. Could anything else make me tremble so?"

"I have been trembling all the morning," said Julia.

"True enough, but not deep in the heart—not—oh! where is your grandfather? They have taken him off while we are standing here. Come, child, come—how could we lose sight of him?"

They hurried into the Park, and across to the City Hall, which they reached in time to secure a single glance of the prisoner as he was conducted up the staircase, still followed by the rabble.

The court-room became crowded immediately after the prisoner was led in, and it was with considerable difficulty that an officer forced a passage for the unhappy pair to the seats reserved for witnesses. Mrs. Gray was already in court, a little more serious than usual, but still so confident of her *protegee's* innocence, and filled with such reverence for the infallibility of the law, that she had almost religious faith in his acquittal. She smiled cheerfully when Mrs. Warren and Julia came up, and her black silk gown rustled again as she moved her ponderous person that they might find room near her. Mrs. Warren was a good deal excited: she even made an effort to reach her husband as they were conducted through the court, but the crowd was too dense, and spite of herself she was borne forward

to the witnesses seats without obtaining an opportunity to whisper a word of what was passing in her heart. The judges were upon the bench; the lawyers took their places, and all the preliminaries of an important trial commenced. The prisoner remained calm as he had been all the morning, but there was nothing stupid or indifferent in his manner. When informed of his right of challenge to the jury, he examined each man as he came up with a searching glance, and two or three times gave a peremptory challenge. He listened with interest to the questions put by the court, and sunk back in his seat breathing deeply as if an important duty was over, when the jury were at length empaneled.

The district attorney opened his case with great ability. He was a keen, eloquent man, who pursued his course against any person unfortunate enough to be placed before him with the relentless zeal of a blood hound, yielding nothing to compassion, feeling no weakness, and forgiving none. His duty was to convict—his reputation might be lessened or enhanced by the decision of a jury—that thought was ever in his mind—he was struggling for position, for forensic fame. The jury before him was to add a leaf to his yet green laurels, or tear one away. What was a human life in the balance with this thought?

To have watched this man one might have supposed that the feeble old prisoner who sat so meekly beneath the keen flashes of his eyes, and the keen lash of his eloquence, had been his bitterest enemy. Even in opening the case, where little of eloquence is expected, he could not forbear many a sharp taunt and cruel invective against the old man, who met it all with a sort of rebuking calmness that might have shamed the dastardly eloquence which was in no way necessary to justice.

You should have seen dear Mrs. Gray as the lawyer went on; no winter apple ever glowed more ruddily than her cheek; no star ever flashed more brightly than her fine eyes. The folds of her silken dress rustled with the indignation that kept her in constant unrest; and she would bend first to old Mrs. Warren, and then to Julia, whispering, "never mind, dears—never mind his impudence! Our lawyer will have a chance soon, then won't that fellow catch it! Don't mind what he says, its his business—the state pays him for it—more shame to the people. Our man will be on his feet soon. I ain't the state of New York, but then he's got a fee that ought to sharpen his tongue, and expects more when it's over. Only let him give that fellow his own again with interest—compound interest—and if I don't throw in an extra ten dollars, my name isn't Sarah Gray. Oh, if I could but give him a piece

of my mind now! There, there, Mrs. Warren, don't look so white! it's only talk. They won't convict him—it's only talk!"

Mrs. Gray was drawn from this good-natured attempt to cheer her friends by the proceedings of the court, that each moment became more and more impressive.

The prosecution brought forth its witnesses, those who had appeared in the preliminary trial, with many others hunted out by Adeline's indefatigable attorney. Never was a chain of evidence more complete—never did guilt appear so hideous or more firmly established. Every witness as he descended from the stand seemed to have thrown a darker stain of guilt upon that old man. The sharp cross-examinations of the prisoner's counsel only elucidated some new point against him. His acute wit and keen questioning brought nothing to light that did not operate against the cause a better man might have been excused for abandoning in despair. It seemed impossible that anything could overthrow all this weight of evidence: even the desperate plea of insanity would be of no avail. No one could look on the solemn, and yet serene face of that old man, without giving him credit for a steadiness of mind that no legal eloquence could distort.

Among the last witnesses brought up was Julia Warren. The determination not to give evidence which had just escaped legal censure on the examination, had been reasoned away by her grandfather, who believed himself that the laws should be obeyed in all things, leaving the result with God, had succeeded in convincing the mind of this young girl that her duty was obedience. She arose, therefore, when summoned to the stand, turned her eyes upon her grandfather as if to gather courage from his strength, and moved forward tremulously, it is true, but with more fortitude than might have been expected in a creature so young and so delicately sensitive. With her usual good sense, Mrs. Gray had taken care that her protegee should be neatly dressed, but spite of the little cottage bonnet with its rose colored lining, that face was colorless as a snow-drop. A thrill of sympathy passed through the crowd as this young girl stood up before them. She was known as the grandchild of the accused, and to possess knowledge that could but deepen the charges against him. This of itself was enough to enlist the generous impulses of a people more keenly alive than any on earth to the claims and dependencies of womanhood. But the shrinking modesty of her demeanor—the exquisite purity of her loveliness—her youth, the innate refinement that breathed about her like an atmosphere, all conspired to make her an object of generous pity. There was not a face present, even to the officers, that did not bare

some trace of this feeling when the first view of her features was obtained. The face in which this tender compassion beamed most eloquently was that of the old prisoner. For the first time that day tears came into his eyes, but when her glance was turned upon him with a look that pleaded for strength and for pardon, eloquently as eyes ever pleaded to a human soul; the grandfather answered it with a smile that kindled up her pale face as if an angel had passed by, which no one had the power to see save her and the old man.

She touched her lips to the sacred volume with a look of angelic obedience toward the judges;

and when the prosecuting attorney commenced his examination, she answered his questions with a degree of modest dignity that checked any desire he might have felt to excite or annoy her with useless interrogations. Nothing could be more absorbing than the attention paid to every word that dropped from her lips, by the court. She spoke low, and faltered a little now and then, but the tones of her voice were so sadly sweet; the tears seemed so close to her eyes without reaching them, that even the judges and the jury leaned forward to catch those tones, rather than break them by a request that she should speak louder. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

JULIA WARREN.

A SEQUEL TO PALACES AND PRISONS.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 168.

CHAPTER XIII.

I WILL not give the entire evidence of Julia as she uttered it in detail, because most of my readers know already the events which she related; I have attempted no melodramatic effect by an effort at mystery. The truth which that court could not know is already made manifest to those who have followed my story up to this point. When questioned if she had known the deceased, Julia answered that she had seen him three times in her life. Once upon a wharf near the Battery, where she had wandered with flowers and fruit which she wished to sell. He then purchased a few of her flowers, and presented them to a lady who had left a southern vessel with him but a few moments before. She described how he had driven away with the lady at his side, and said at that time she never expected to have seen him again.

"But you did see him again," said the examining counsel. "Tell us where and how?"

"It was in October, the night before he—before he died, I was going up town with some flowers which a lady had ordered for a ball she gave that night. It was rather late when I started from Dunlap's, and I walked fast, fearing to lose my way after dark. This man saw me as I was passing a house with a flower-garden in front, and a pretty fountain throwing up water among the dahlias and chrysanthums; I was out of breath, and walked a little slower just then, for the water-drops as they fell were like music, and everything around was so lovely that I could not find it in my heart to walk fast. I did not stop; but Mr. Leicester saw me and wanted me to sell my flowers. I told him no; but he *would* have them, and almost pushed me, basket and all, through the gate and into the house."

"Well, what passed in the house?"

"He took me up stairs into a chamber, and there I saw the same lady that was with him on the wharf, alone, and dressing herself in some beautiful clothes that lay about. She asked me to help her, and I did. She took some of my flowers for her hair and her dress. I was in a great hurry, and wished to go, but she begged

me to stay a few minutes longer, and I could not refuse. After she was dressed, we went down stairs, and this lady was married to Mr. Leicester in a room below. The wedding seemed like a funeral; the lady cried all the time, and so did I. When it was all over they let me go, and I carried the rest of my flowers to the lady who had ordered them. It was getting late when I went back; I lost my way; a gentleman stood looking into a window at the corner of some street; I asked him to tell me the way home without looking in his face; he turned. It was Mr. Leicester; he *would* go home with me; I did not like it, and would rather have been lost in the streets all night; but all that I could say against it did no good. He followed me home, down the basement steps, and to the door of grandfather's room. There was no light in the room; and while grandpa was kindling a match Mr. Leicester went away. I do not know how, but when the candle was lighted I looked round for him, and he was gone!"

"Did you tell your grandfather that he had followed you?"

"Yes, I always tell grandfather everything!"

"So you told him that this man had followed you home against your will?"

"Yes, I told him."

"Was he angry?"

"My grandfather never is angry!"

"But what did he say?"

"Nothing particular. He kept his arm around me a good while I remember as I was warming myself, and seemed to feel mournful about something. He asked several questions about the man, how he looked, and what he said."

"And was that all he said or did?"

"No. He prayed for me that night before we went to bed more earnestly than I had ever heard him before. I remember, he asked God to protect me from harm, and said that he was old, so old that he was of no use, and well stricken in years. It was not the first time I had heard him say this, but that night I remember well, for it made me cry!"

"When was the next time you saw Mr. Leicester?"

Julia grew pale as she replied to this question, and her voice became so faint that she could scarcely be heard.

"I saw him the next morning!"

"At what hour?"

"I do not know exactly; but we had just done breakfast when he came into the basement where we lived, and attempted to speak with my grandfather!"

"Did your grandfather know him? Did he call Mr. Leicester by name?"

"He did not call him by name; but I think they must have known each other!"

"Why do you think so?"

"Because grandfather turned so pale and looked so dreadfully; I never saw him look so before."

"Well, what passed after he came in?"

"I do not know; he sent us both out of the room, grandma and me."

"Where did you go?"

"Into the entry; we had no other place!"

"Did you hear nothing after?"

"Yes, the sound of voices, but no words; then Mr. Leicester rushed through the door, and out to the area; we thought he was gone, but in a minute he came back and went into the basement again; we heard no words after that but a heavy fall. We went in, Mr. Leicester lay on the floor; grandpa was close by; there was blood about; but I do not know anything else, my head grew dizzy; I remember clinging to grandmother that I might not fall."

"And this is all you know?"

"Yes, it is all!"

It is impossible to describe the effect this young girl's evidence produced upon the court. She did not weep or blush as most girls of her age might have done. The feelings that gave her voice those tones of thrilling sadness, the subdued pain so visible in her sweet countenance, were all too strong and deep for these more common manifestations. You saw that this young creature was performing a solemn duty, when she stood up there to testify against the being whom she loved better than anything on earth—that the single hour which she occupied on the stand would leave behind it such memories as weigh upon the heart forever. Julia descended from the gaze of that crowd older at heart by ten years than ordinary events would have left her. Great suffering brings painful precocity with it. It takes but a few moments to harden iron into steel, but the fire is hot, and the blows hard which accomplish the transformation.

The defence refused all cross-examination, and Julia was told that she might leave the stand.

As the permission was given, she lifted her heavy eyes and turned them once more upon her grandfather—oh, what a world of anguish lay in that look. The old man answered it with another smile. She saw it but dimly, for her eyes were filling with tears, but its sad sweetness made her faint. She tottered back to the seat by her grandmother, leaned her head against the wall, and without a sigh or a motion became as insensible as the wall itself.

It was strange, but the evidence of this young girl, strongly as it bore against the prisoner in fact, created a feeling in his favor with the jury, and disposed the crowd to more charitable thoughts of the old man who could make himself so beloved by a creature like that. As for Mrs. Gray, she absolutely sobbed till the chair shook under her all the time that Julia was speaking. But the grandmother sat motionless, only turning her eyes slowly from her husband to the jury, and from them to the judges, striving, poor creature, to gather some ray of hope from their faces.

It was a strong proof of the influence which the truthfulness of this young creature had upon the court, that there was a good deal of legal informality permitted in the examination. She had been allowed to tell her story after her own gentle fashion, without undue interference from the lawyers; and for a little time after she left the stand there was a profound silence in the crowd, as if no one could break, even by a whisper, the impressions which her evidence had left.

This silence was broken by the prisoner, who arose, all at once, and attempted to move toward his granddaughter. While all others were absorbed, he had seen her head droop against the wall, the heavy lids settle like snow-flakes over her eyes, and the color quenched around her mouth. The sight was too much for him, and he started up as I have described, but only to feel the officers gripe upon his arm.

"See, see, you have killed her," said the old man, pointing with his finger to the insensible girl. "Let me go to her, I say—one minute—only a minute! No one else can bring her to life!"

The officer attempted to resist the old man.

"Sit down—sit down," he said, "it disturbs the court. She shall have care, only be quiet."

The prisoner resisted this friendly violence, and struggled against the man with all his feeble strength.

"She is dead: I tell you it has killed her, poor thing!—poor darling, she is dead!" he repeated, and tears rolled heavily down his face. "Will no one see if she is quite, quite gone?"

As if in answer to this pathetic cry for aid, a young man forced his way up from a corner of the room, where he had stood all day regarding every stage of the trial with keen interest, and

taking Julia in his arms, carried her to an open window.

"Give me water," he said, to the officer; "there is some before the judge," then turning toward Mrs. Gray, who, occupied by the prisoner, had been quite insensible to Julia's situation, he said abruptly, "have you no hartshorn: nothing about you, aunt, that will be of use?"

"Dear me, yes," answered the good lady, producing a vial of camphor from the depths of her pocket, "I thought something of the kind might happen; here is the water too; there, her eyelids begin to move."

"She is better—she will soon be well," said Robert Otis, turning his face toward the prisoner, who stood up in the midst of the court, looking after his grandchild with eyes that might have touched a heart of stone.

"Thank you—thank you!" said the old man. Without another word he sat down, and covering his face with both hands, wept like a child.

After a little Julia was led back to her seat, and Robert Otis withdrew into the crowd again: another witness was examined and dismissed. Then there came a pause in the proceedings. The witness' stand was for a time unoccupied. The district attorney sat restlessly on his chair, casting anxious glances toward the door, as if waiting for some person important to his cause. The judge was just bending forward to desire the proceedings to go on, when a slight bustle near the door caused a movement through the whole crowd. Those persons near the entrance were pressed back against their neighbors by two officers in authority, who thus made a lane up to the witness' stand, through which a lady passed with rapid footsteps, and evidently much excited by the position in which she found herself.

A whisper of surprise, not unmingled with admiration, ran through the crowd as this lady took her place upon the stand. She hesitated an instant, then with a graceful motion swept the veil of heavy lace back upon her bonnet, and turned toward the judges. The face thus exposed had something far more striking in it than beauty. It was a haughty face full of determination, and with a calmness upon the features that was too rigid not to have been forced. Notwithstanding this, you could see that the woman trembled in every limb as she bared her features to the crowd. It was not the bashful tremor which might have brought crimson to the brow of any female while so many eyes were bent upon her, but a strong nervous excitement which lifted her above all these considerations. The contrast of a black velvet dress flowing to her feet and fitted high at the throat, might have added somewhat to the singular effect pro-

duced by a face at once so stern and so beautiful. Certain it is, that a thrill of that respect which strong feeling always carries with it passed through the crowd, and though she was strikingly lovely, people forgot that in sympathy for the emotions that she suppressed with such fortitude. The rapidity with which she had entered the court, and the position which she took on the stand, prevented a full view of her face to Mrs. Warren and Julia, but as she turned slowly toward them, in throwing back her veil the effect upon these two persons was startling enough. The old woman half rose from her chair, her lips moved as if a smothered cry had died upon them, and she sat down again grasping a fold of Mrs. Gray's gown in her hands. It was the face she had seen in the carriage that morning! Julia also recognized the lady with a start. It was the woman who had purchased flowers of her so often, who had been so invariably kind, and whose fate had been so singularly blended with her own since the first day when she had purchased violets from her flower basket.

There was something startling to the young girl in this sudden apparition of a person, who had been to her almost like fate itself. At that solemn moment she drew her breath heavily and listened with painful attention for the first words that might fall upon the court. Mrs. Gray also was filled with astonishment, for she saw her own brother, Jacob Strong, enter the court, walking close behind the lady until she mounted the stand, with the air and manner of an attendant. When the lady took her position, he drew back toward the door and stood motionless gazing anxiously upon her face, without turning his eyes aside even for an instant. It was in vain Mrs. Gray motioned with her hand that he should approach her, all his senses seemed swallowed up by the keen interest in the lady. He had no existence for the time but in her.

Of all the persons in the court-room there was not one who did not exhibit some unusual interest in the woman placed so unexpectedly upon the witness' stand, except the prisoner himself. He had been during some moments sitting with his forehead bent upon his clasped hands lost in thought, or it might be in silent prayer to the God who had, as it seemed, almost abandoned him. He did not look up when the lady entered, and not till the examination had proceeded to some considerable length was he aware of her presence.

It was worthy of remark that the prosecuting attorney addressed this witness with a degree of respect which he had extended to no other person. His voice, hitherto so sharp and biting, took a subdued tone. His manner became deferential, and the opening questions, in which he

was usually abrupt almost to rudeness, were now rather insinuated than demanded. He waived the usual preliminaries regarding the age and name of the witness, and even apologized for the necessity which had compelled him to bring her before the court. The lady listened to all this with a little impatience, she was evidently in no state of mind for common-place gallantries, and seemed relieved when he commenced those direct questions which were to place her evidence before the court.

"Mrs. Garden, that is your name, I believe!"

The lady bent her head.

"Did you know Mr. Edward Leicester when he was living?"

A faint tremor passed over the lady's lips, but she answered clearly, though in a very subdued voice,

"Yes, I knew him!"

"He visited at your house sometimes?"

"Yes!"

"When did you see him last?"

"On the——" Her voice became almost inaudible as she uttered the date: but the lawyer had keen ears, and forbore to ask a repetition of the words, for her face changed suddenly, and it seemed with a violent effort that she was able to go on.

"At what hour did he leave your house?"

"I do not know the exact hour!"

"Was it late?"

"Yes, I gave a ball that night, and my guests generally remained late!"

"Did you observe anything peculiar in his manner that night? Did he act like a man that was likely to commit suicide in the morning?"

It was half a minute before the lady gave any reply to this question, then she spoke with an effort as if some nervous affection were almost choking her.

"I cannot judge—I do not know. It is a strange question to ask me!"

"I regret its necessity!" said the attorney, with a deferential bend of the head; "our object is," he added, addressing the judge, "to show by this witness how the deceased was occupied during the night before his murder. I believe it is the intention of the defence to claim that Edward Leicester killed himself. That it was a case of suicide instead of the foul murder we will prove it to have been. I wish to show by this lady that he was a guest in her mansion up to a late hour; that he joined in the festivities of a ball, and was among the most cheerful revellers present. I must repeat the question, madam—did you remark anything singular in his manner—anything to distinguish him from other guests?"

The lady parted her lips, struggled, and answered,

"No, I saw nothing!" She lifted her eyes after this as if impelled by some magnetic power, and met those of the tall, gaunt man who had followed her into court. His look of sorrowful reproach seemed to sting her, and she spoke again louder and more resolutely. "There was nothing in the words or acts of Edward Leicester that night which warranted an idea of suicide—nothing!"

A faint sound, not quite a groan, but deeper than a sigh, broke from Jacob Strong, and he shrunk back into the crowd with his head drooping like some animal stricken with an arrow, and anxious to hide the wound. That moment, as if actuated by one of those impulses that seem like the strides of fate toward an object, the district attorney said, as it seemed in the very wantonness of his professional privilege,

"Look at the prisoner, madam. Did you ever see him before?"

The lady turned partly round and looked toward the prisoner's seat. The old man had his head bowed, for the sight of his insensible grandchild had left him strengthless, and she could only distinguish the soft wave of grey hairs around his temples, and the stoop of a figure venerable from age.

"Stand up," commanded the judge, addressing the old man—"stand up that the witness may look upon your face!"

The old man arose and stood upright. His eyes were lifted slowly, and met those of the woman which were filled with cold abhorrence of the being she was forced to look upon. I cannot describe those two faces as their eyes were riveted upon each other: both were instantly pale as death. After a moment, in which something of doubt mingled with pallor, that of the woman took an expression of almost terrible affright. Her pale lips quivered; her eyes distended with wild brilliancy: she lifted one hand that shook like an aspen, and swept it across her eyes once, twice, as if to clear their vision. She attempted to utter no sound; the sight of that old man chilled her through and through, body and soul. She seemed freezing into marble.

The change that came upon the prisoner was not less remarkable. At first there settled upon his face a look of the most profound astonishment. It deepened, changed, and as snow becomes luminous when the sunshine strikes it, the very pallor of his features brightened. Affection, tenderness, the most thrilling gratitude beamed through their whiteness, and while her gaze was fascinated by his, he stretched forth his arms. This scene was so strange, the agitation of these persons so unaccountable, that it held the whole court breathless. You might have heard an insect stir in every part of that vast room. It

seemed with every breath as if some cry must burst from the old man—as if the lady would sink to the earth, dead, so terrible was her agitation. But the prisoner only stretched forth his arms, and it seemed as if this slight motion restored the lady to herself. Her face hardened, she turned away, withdrawing her gaze slowly as if the effort cost her a mortal pang. Then she answered,

“No, I do not recognize him!”

Her lips were like marble, and her voice so husky that it made the hearers shrink, but every word was clearly enunciated.

The old man fell back to his seat: his arms dropped heavily down, he too seemed frozen into stone.

For a moment the witness stood mute and still; and then she started all at once, turned and descended into the crowd.

Mrs. Warren, whom no one had observed during this scene, arose from her seat as the lady passed and followed her. The crowd closed around them, but the old woman struggled through, and laid a trembling grasp upon the velvet dress that floated before her like the waves of a pall. The lady turned her white face sharply round, and it came close to that of the old woman. A convulsion stirred her features: she lifted her arm as if to fling it around that frail form, then dashed it down, tearing her dress from that feeble grasp, and walked steadily out of the court.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

KATE MANLEY.

BY LOUISE MAY.

CHAPTER I.

"WELL, well, for my part I cannot think why poor girls want fine books and bouquets of flowers to be sent to them; for they can have but little time after their day's work to amuse themselves with such things. I should think it would take all the leisure time to mend their clothes, so as to look respectable. But when it comes to going to the opera, what is more ridiculous!"

This was said by Caroline Morton, as she sat braiding her beautiful hair to make her best appearance at the opera that evening. Her mother was busily engaged tacking roses in a head-dress, and was too full of her own and daughter's happiness to hear or see anything beyond it. But her brother, who had been reading, looked up and said, somewhat sarcastically,

"Some young ladies are so fond of perusing the last new novel, and doing a little fancy work now and then, that they are very apt to forget they have any clothes to mend; and if it was not for their foolish and indulgent mothers, would, I think, robbed of their fine over-dress, make rather a ragged appearance."

It was now Caroline's turn to blush. She knew there was truth in her brother's remark; and plainly saw she had hurt his feelings. While she was thinking of an answer he hastily left the room. The harsh closing of the door caused Mrs. Morton to look up. What was her surprise at seeing her daughter in tears!

"Why, what on earth is the matter, my child?" she said. "I thought to find you ready to try on this beautiful head-dress. I hope it will be becoming, for you know, Caddy, there will be a great many snares thrown out for this handsome stranger, and as you received the first invitation from him, he certainly must admire you most. So quit your crying: it makes your eyes so red, and you will need all your good looks to-night,

for it will be very mortifying to me for any of the girls to take him from you."

"I hope it will not be brother's beautiful school-teacher that will do it," said Caroline, with a sneer. "I will pay him for his cutting remarks to me to-day; it is come to something I think, one can scarce dare to think in his presence since he has made the acquaintance of this Kate Manley, or whatever her name is. I cannot bear the name of Kate, I think it vulgar, and I expect she is just as vulgar as her name. Brother," she added, "is very ungrateful, after my consenting to be seen in her company this evening. What excuse can I make to Mr. Clayton, if he should by chance find out who she is? A school-teacher indeed, and a poverty-stricken one at that. I really think Brother Harry is going crazy."

"Oh! no, my dear, your brother is young," replied her mother, "by the time he is as old, and has seen as much of the world as Mr. Clayton, he will, I know, exercise as good judgment. Besides Miss Manley is no doubt a passable looking girl: and you are not obliged to tell who and what she is; and if she is vulgar-looking as you think, it will make your refined and fashionable appearance show to better advantage. But come, come, do more and talk less. It is almost time for your admirer to be here, and your brother has been gone some time. There is the bell now, and you not half ready. I will send Nancy to assist you while I entertain Mr. Clayton; time seems so long when one is waiting, and perhaps I can quiz him a little. I would like to know who he is, and all about him; he must be rich, or he would not be at Stanleys; for they never keep company with any but wealthy people."

When Mrs. Morton opened the parlor door Mr. Clayton bowed, and said he had been admiring the drawings on the centre-table.

"Oh, bless you, sir," she answered, "them's nothing to what my Caddy can do. Have you seen them she gave to Mrs. Stanley?"

"No, madam, I really have not; fine people the Stanleys."

"Yes, very. Are you from England, sir?"

"No, madam."

"You look so much like a count that was here some time ago; he married an acquaintance of my daughter's; but he turned out to be a dreadful bad man."

"What did you say his name was?" inquired Mr. Clayton.

"I forgot his name; Mrs. Stanley can tell you. He was in this country a year, and in his absence, some one robbed him of his title and fortune, at least that was his story, but for my part I doubt whether he ever had any, I am rather inclined to think he had not."

"May I ask where he is now?"

"I really cannot tell you, but you need not be afraid of ever meeting him here; my daughter is very particular about her company. She is afraid of getting taken in herself," at the same time giving him a quizzical glance.

I cannot tell what would have followed, but Nancy opening the door, said Miss Morton was ready. Mr. Clayton looked quite pleased at the intelligence. Mrs. Morton, slamming the door, declared she never saw such a man in her life, there was no getting anything out of him.

CHAPTER II.

"My dear, if you are going to the opera to-night, it is time for you to think of getting ready," said Mrs. Manley to her daughter, "but indeed, you look so pale and dejected after sitting up last night, that I do not think I shall allow you to do it again."

"Oh, say not so, dear mother," replied the daughter, "if you only knew how happy your own dear Kate was as she sat listening to the ravings of her favorite pupil. Oh! how she prayed for God to bless her teacher, and then she would cry for drink, drink, and if any one save me would offer her what she wished, she would look at them for an instant, shake her head, and turn silently, but sadly away. But when I came and said, 'take it for me,' she would stare, look beautiful, but wild, as though my voice alone had brought her to recollection, and clasping her arms around my neck, would say, 'oh! yes, yes, I will take anything from you, you are my teacher.' Oh, mother, I would not have exchanged my place last night to have been mistress of a fortune; it is not this that makes me sad. I will tell you plainly. The addresses of Mr. Morton have become disagreeable to me. There is something in him so cold—a

something which plainly says, 'Kate, I love you, but I could love you better, more openly if you were anything else but a poor school-teacher.'"

This made Mrs. Manley start with some emotion, for she had vainly hoped to see her daughter united to Mr. Morton. But she had too much love for her only child to offer any opposition, but smiling said,

"Kate, that I think is all fancy; you know his sister is to be there to-night on purpose to make your acquaintance. That looks like anything but pride."

"Ah! mother, people in this world are not always what they seem. Mr. Morton, like many others, may have hid within his own bosom what he would not like either you or me to know; but I will try and think that it is all my fancy."

Poor Kate, could you have been a listener in Caroline Morton's room, your fancies would have turned to stern reality.

"But come, my dear," said Mrs. Manley, "you have no time to lose. What dress and ornaments are you going to wear? Will you wear the pink dress that was sent you by your uncle?"

"No, mother, I will wear my plain white dress and the pearl ornaments, the last gift of my departed father. Those I think will be most becoming to one like me."

And in truth the attire was becoming. Her long, dark ringlets bound here and there with a string of pearls; her flowing sleeves looped up with a single ornament of the same; and her necklace and bracelets put on, Kate's toilet was complete; and as her mother threw a dark cloak around her, she saw her face looked sad, but thought in the pride of her heart she never saw her child more lovely.

The carriage having arrived, Kate took her little bouquet and sorrowfully departed. When they arrived the seats that had been taken were as yet unoccupied.

"Just as I thought," said Harry, "Caroline would not for the world come until the piece is half over, for that would not be fashionable. However, first come first served." So seating Kate in what he thought the most comfortable place, he placed himself beside her.

Kate sat looking and admiring, for the opera was new to her. Still that sad expression continued on her face, and the tears started in spite of all. When the curtain rose, and the music sent forth its sweet and plaintive notes, its charm was not lost on Kate. It brought to her face a lovely smile, and as she sat resting her cheek upon her small and well-shaped hand, many were the inquiries made among that gay and fashionable crowd as to who she was.

When Caroline Morton arrived, Mr. Clayton's frequent glances toward Kate did not escape the

quick and jealous eye of his companion. Caroline tried with all the art she was mistress of to engross his whole attention, and though she partially succeeded, his thoughts were somewhere else. Caroline saw and felt that in Kate she had a rival; and from that moment she felt a hatred toward Miss Manley that knew no bounds. Caroline, too, had been angry from the first, for when they arrived she found that the first scene was nearly over; everybody was listening, and almost breathlessly to the beautiful music of Norma, so in place of making a grand *entrée* and attracting every one's attention, she entered almost unnoticed.

Mr. Clayton, too, thinking it would be an annoyance to those who really loved music, to have him push forward in the middle of the scene, took the back seat as quietly as possible until the scene was ended.

"Never mind," thought Caroline, "it will give me time to think which way to proceed to get my revenge. She is a pale, ghostly-looking creature as ever I saw; she looks like a regular book-worm. What can she know of fashionable life? Am I to be put down by one like her? No, no, I will try her power of conversation, and when Mr. Clayton sees the difference, I know he has too much judgment to be taken by that pale, know-nothing face." And she smiled a bitter smile, as though she was ready to put into execution what she had been thinking.

The curtain fell amidst loud shouts of applause from every part of the house, and where a few minutes previous all was order, now all was noise and confusion. Ladies rose to see and be seen. Gentlemen left their seats, Harry Morton among the rest; and not until then was he aware that his sister and Mr. Clayton had made their appearance. He apologized, and, turning to Kate, gave the promised introduction.

Miss Manley looked the haughty beauty in the face for a moment, then bowing gracefully, she said she was most happy to make her acquaintance, at the same time offering her hand, which Miss Morton coolly took, and turning to Mr. Clayton, laughingly said,

"You see Miss Manley is one of the old school. This shaking hands has been some time out of date with us."

"Yes, and the practice of kissing introduced in its place," he quietly replied; "but, for my part, I must say I like the old-fashioned way the best."

Caroline feigned not to notice this rebuff, but passing to her seat commenced a lively conversation, not forgetting a hint at Kate as often as she could. Kate felt it all, and wished herself at home again. Her pale face and quivering lip was not unnoticed by Mr. Clayton, who invited

her to stand a little while, which she refused; but turning to Mr. Morton, requested they should leave. This, as his situation was anything but pleasant, he was very glad to consent to do.

Kate drew her cloak around her, bade them good evening, and was about to leave, when Caroline said, "oh, Miss Manley, I came very near forgetting my politeness," then drawing forth a showy card-case, and presenting her coolly with a card, she said, "you must call and see me."

Kate took it with a trembling hand.

"Why, what is the matter, child?" said Caroline, "you must be nervous you tremble so, put it in your pocket or you will lose it; and I am no way ambitious to have my name so common as to be picked up by anybody."

"I can assure Miss Morton she need not feel the least alarmed," said Kate, her bosom heaving with emotion, but drawing forth a neat and beautiful case, she said, "you see, I will put it in a more appropriate place, at the same time allow me to return the compliment," and she presented her card, "my time is occupied until five o'clock, but after that hour, should Miss Morton feel like paying me a friendly visit, I should be happy to see her."

"Is the same invitation extended to me?" inquired Mr. Clayton. Kate bowed gracefully: and they separated. The one thinking, "she will not want any more of my society," and the other, "can this be what the world calls the pleasures of a fashionable life? If so, I want no more. This night has learned me a lesson never to be forgotten. Let them aspire to show and fashion that will, my motto shall be happiness."

CHAPTER III.

"WELL, Edward, how did you enjoy yourself last night?" said Mrs. Stanley to her nephew, Mr. Clayton, "you seem to be rather dull this morning, I thought to have seen you so lively and talkative that you would have entertained me the whole day with your admiration of Miss Morton. She is, I believe, counted the belle of the season."

"She may be by some, aunt; but not by me, I assure you. I think her anything but pretty—anything but sensible."

"You are rather severe on Miss Morton, but, however, it will give some of the other young ladies a chance. Here you are, with good looks in your favor, plenty of money, and all you want now is a nice little wife to help you spend it."

"Well, aunt, should I marry Miss Morton, I should be at no loss for some one to do that, for with her mother's help I think they would soon lighten my purse. The old lady seems very fond of knowing who and what one is. May I ask who she is? People that are so very inquisitive

should never be offended with others who like to return the compliment."

"Edward, you know I am one of these kind of people that hear and see all, and say but little. Mrs. Morton arose from nothing, and is a true believer in the don't-tell-me-what-I-was-once, but-what-I-am-now doctrine. This is all you can know from me."

"That is enough," replied Edward, laughing, "that was just the opinion I formed of the old lady myself. But, aunt, let us change the subject. Are you a believer in love at first sight?"

"That is a strange question, Edward. Why do you ask?"

"Because I am."

"How long since? I hope you will not marry in haste and repent at your leisure."

"I do not think it possible that I should ever repent in marrying a young lady like Miss Manley," replied he, seriously.

"Manley!" said Mrs. Stanley, "I once knew a family of that name; but it cannot be them. I remember well hearing Mrs. Manley say, at her husband's death, 'we are the only two now remaining.'"

"What two, aunt?"

"Herself and daughter, who I think then was about thirteen years of age."

"Should this be the same family, do you know anything against them, with the exception of their being poor?"

"No, Edward, they were a family to grace any society. Mr. Manley was a minister, and died as he had lived, beloved by all who knew him; nothing, I assure you, would give me greater pleasure than to renew the acquaintance. But why do I talk thus? It cannot be the same. I have been in the city five years, and I left them at the old homestead, where I was under the impression they would end their days."

"Will you make me one promise?"

"Well, Edward, name it."

"I have already sent a note to Miss Manley, telling her I shall pay her and her mother a visit to-morrow afternoon. Promise to go with me."

"That I will do with pleasure."

"Should you recognize your old friend in Mrs. Manley," he said.

But his aunt playfully interrupted him, "and you your little wife (that is to be) in Kate, we shall both be equally gratified."

Clayton laughed. "Well," he said, "remember, aunt, this must all be kept a secret."

"Oh, certainly, did you ever know a woman, old or young, that was not fond of a little romance?"

"No—nor one that could keep a secret?"

"Very well, sir, it is good for you that you have

made your escape, it is already eleven o'clock, and not one visit paid; and there is poor Mrs. Smith waiting patiently for my order to get necessities for her little family."

CHAPTER IV.

THE season for balls and parties was nearly over. All the young ladies were wondering who would be the winner of Mrs. Stanley's nephew. In spite of all the manoeuvring, no offer had been made that any one knew of. It had been whispered, indeed, that there was a house building for him, so he certainly must intend settling in Philadelphia.

If some of the young ladies or their manoeuvring mammas had been present when Edward and his aunt paid the promised visit to Kate, they would have known who this house was for. Mrs. Stanley had found in Mrs. Manley her old friend. Circumstances had greatly changed since they had parted. When the new minister took charge of the little church so well known to them, Kate Manley thought she would rather be a school-teacher in a strange city, than receive their living as an act of charity. Accordingly to the city she came.

From the hour of this interview, Edward became inseparable to Kate. He had loved her with a pure, disinterested love from their first meeting; and every day only increased his passion, by developing more the charms of her mind. Nor was Kate insensible to his merit. She learned to watch for his footsteps, to hang upon his every word; and when finally he ventured to whisper his love, she hid her face on his shoulder, and acknowledged that the feeling was returned.

As we have said, the season was over for parties. One only now remained, and as that was to be given by Mrs. Stanley, none doubted its being a splendid affair.

The night arrived, and Caroline Morton had nearly completed her toilet. Suddenly she sat down in a peevish manner, and said, "I never saw anything like it."

"What is the matter now?" inquired her mother.

"I never try my best to look well," said Caroline, "but what I am disappointed; nothing seems to go right with me, to-night. Harry promised to bring my bouquet, at least an hour ago, I expect that will be wrong too when it comes."

She had not finished the last sentence, when her brother entered with the promised bouquet.

"What are you laughing at?" said Harry, "I am glad to see you in such good spirits."

"Why, I never see a bouquet of flowers but I think of your Kate Manley. What has become

of her? Have you ever seen her since the night of the opera?"

"Yes, once," said Harry, with a sigh, "and that was to be dismissed forever from the house; and you will confer a favor on me by never mentioning her name to me again."

"Poor fellow," said Caroline, sarcastically, "you speak as though your heart was nearly broken, I hope you will see some young lady that will break it for you quite to-night."

"Ditto, sister," replied Harry, tartly, "I hope you will see something to bring down your haughty pride."

With this very pleasing conversation they left for Mrs. Stanley's. When they arrived the guests had all assembled: everything was going on pleasantly and in good taste. But where was Mr. Clayton? All wondered, but none liked to ask.

Finally he made his appearance. But who was that beautiful and modest-looking girl that reclined so gracefully on his arm? "She must be a stranger," was whispered through the room. Many were the introductions, but still there was a mystery that none could solve; none except Caroline Morton; she well knew that face again, and in bitterness thought "Harry wished I might see something to-night that would humble my pride, it is done; but he shall not have the satisfaction of knowing it."

Actions, however, speak louder than words. Both spoke loud enough the next morning, when Harry Morton, looking over the paper, read,

"Married, at the residence of Mrs. Stanley, by the Rev. —, Edward Clayton, Esq., to Miss Kate Manley, daughter of the late Rev. John Manley."

KEEPING A CARRIAGE.

BY JANE WEAVER.

"I wish pa kept a carriage," said Julia Nelson to her mother, one day on coming home from school.

"Why, my child?"

"Because Mary Jones and Lydia Burroughs both have carriages to come for them when it rains; and it makes one feel so mean to see one's schoolmates riding home, while one has to trudge through the wet on foot. All the girls, and even the teachers think more of Mary and Lydia than of me, and the others whose fathers don't keep carriages."

"I am sorry to see you so discontented, Julia," replied her mother. "Your words imply an envious disposition which I never before suspected you to possess. Your father, my dear, is not able to keep a carriage, or else he would, at least if he thought it would gratify either you or me. We cannot control fortune always, and some are rich, and others poor, without any peculiar merit, or demerit. But we can all exercise a contented spirit. We are far better off than many of our neighbors; and for this we should be thankful. You ought to think of this, my child, when you feel these envious promptings in the heart. If you would contrast your lot with those below, rather than with those above, you would be far happier."

"But, ma, you don't know how hard it is to see the girls all pay court to Mary Jones and Lydia Burroughs, when I know they are no better than me. There's Mary Jones, indeed, a perfect romp. And so ill-behaved too. Don't you remember, ma, at Mrs. Townsend's party, she boasted she had tasted everything on the table, and had a specimen of all the curious confectionary wrapped up in one corner of her handkerchief. If I had acted so everybody would have called it rude. But Mary Jones can do as she pleases, and nobody finds fault with her."

"It does seem hard, I know," replied Mrs. Nelson, "but you will find life, my child, full of similar trials. It is useless to deny that riches cover a great many faults. There are always low-minded people willing to pander to the weaknesses of the wealthy; but this does not render vulgarity in the rich the more excusable. The really refined are never blinded to the faults of the wealthy. Let it be your effort to merit the esteem of the good; and you will find yourself

loved far more than those who are more fortunate in worldly gifts. You can then afford to despise the adulation which the weak pay to the merely rich."

This conversation had a lasting effect on Julia. She was a sensible girl, and had an excellent heart, and by following her mother's advice, she soon conquered her great foible, envy. She grew up amiable, well-bred and intelligent. Without being strikingly beautiful, she had a pleasant face and a graceful figure; and she always dressed with taste, though economically. Her father's comparatively limited means did not allow her to wear expensive articles, but in her simple white dress and pretty straw bonnet, she looked a thousand times lovelier than either Mary Jones or Lydia Burroughs, with their damask silks, velvet cloaks, and costly Paris hats.

Mary Jones, however, had grown up quite a beauty. She had big, bold, black eyes; a voluptuous form; was a head taller than most of her sex: and, in short, had all the material to make what is called a splendid woman. She dressed extravagantly. The unnecessary sums spent on her person annually would have supported many a family in comfort. Her father, already rich when this story began, was now a millionaire; and he had but this one daughter. Her manners, however, had not improved. She was still as forward, selfish, and rude as when a school-girl: indeed, but for her wealth she would have been pronounced vulgar.

"My dear," she said, one day, during a call on her bosom friend, Lydia Burroughs, "I have magnificent news for you. The Mexican war is over, and Major Howard is coming home on leave. You know what a hero he has been: wounded twice, once almost mortally; and mentioned, in Gen. Scott's despatches, as having distinguished himself in three battles."

"Why, when he was last here," interposed Lydia, "he was but a lieutenant."

"To be sure. He only left West Point two years before the war began; and now he is a major. And such a splendid looking man. What magnificent black whiskers: and, I've no doubt, a moustache, by this time. Oh! he must be divine. Do you know, my dear, that I think we would make an excellent couple? I intend to set my cap for him."

"And you'll succeed, you are so beautiful," said Lydia, with a sigh, for Lydia was excessively plain. Poor girl, she had already discovered that riches could not do everything: they could not buy a handsome and distinguished husband, and she would not, as yet, take up with any other.

The information of Mary Jones proved correct; and Major Howard came home. At a public ball given to him, on the evening of the day when his fellow citizens presented him with a gold sword, the scheming heiress met him for the first time. She was attired in the most costly manner, and fairly blazed with diamonds. It was, at once, evident that the gallant young soldier was struck by her beauty: he asked to dance with her, and, as soon as possible, returned to solicit that honor again. Mary Jones went home elated with her success, and dreamed all night of the hero. In fact she was as much in love as a woman of her nature could be.

But, when Sunday came, her bright visions received a partial check. She and Julia Nelson both attended the same church, and Major Howard, who had escorted Mary, here first caught sight of the lovely face of Julia. Years before he had known the Nelsons, and he now thought, with pain, how forgetful he had been in not calling on them. When the service was over he met Julia in the aisle, and, with a smile, claimed an acquaintance. The blushing girl, who had felt hurt at his neglect, was embarrassed, and scarcely knew what to say; but this charming confusion only increased her beauty in Major Howard's eyes; and he went home divided in admiration between Mary and Julia.

The former saw the impression that her old schoolmate had created, and was at once jealous and enraged. She was jealous, because she heard Julia's praises in every one's mouth; she was enraged, because Julia was poor, and it chafed the haughty heiress to have a rival in one who was not rich. Nevertheless she resolved to give Julia no advantage. For once she endeavored to control her temper, and she generally succeeded when Major Howard was present. She dressed more expensively than ever, and, as she thought, more beautifully. She made her father give frequent entertainments, to all which Major Howard was invited, while Julia was not, it being her purpose to keep them apart. She daily paraded her parent's magnificent carriage, with its liveried servants, by the hotel where the young soldier lodged.

But all could not prevent the intimacy between Major Howard and Julia increasing. Having plenty of time on his hands, the young hero spent most of it in visiting: and as he was of a refined mind, he delighted particularly in the society of ladies. While his brother officers were wasting

their mornings in the billiard-room, the bar-room, or the piazza of the hotel, he was calling on the different families he knew, sometimes reading to the ladies while they sewed, sometimes describing Mexican life to them. A favorite resort was the parlor of the Nelsons. Here Julia and her mother, after eleven o'clock, were always to be found sewing; and here the major spent half his mornings. It was not long before Julia began to find herself taking an interest in her visitor too deep for her future comfort; for his fascinating manners, unpretending character, high renown, and sterling worth were irresistible. She made this discovery of her weakness, one day, while Major Howard was praising Mary Jones, by the sharp pang of jealousy that his words created.

And now Julia was as unhappy as her rival. She soon learned that most of Major Howard's evenings were spent at Mr. Jones', or at parties in company with Mary. It is true he continued to visit Julia as frequently as ever. But much of his conversation continued to be, as it had always been, addressed to her mother; and she saw nothing in this to console her. Her hopeless love, against which she struggled in vain, soon undermined her health; she grew pale and listless, until finally her mother remarked the change.

It was with the greatest difficulty that Mrs. Nelson induced Julia to confess the state of her heart, and then only by suspecting the truth, and probing her till she acknowledged it. When Julia had revealed all she had to tell, which she did amid many sobs, she continued,

"And, ma, he'll never love me in return; for I am poor, and almost plain-looking, while Mary is rich and beautiful. I know it's very wrong for me to think of him; but I couldn't help it at first; and now—and now—though I try so hard I cannot forget him."

"There is one thing you must do, Julia," replied her mother, "and in this I can assist you: you must see Major Howard no more, or but rarely. In fact you had better leave this place for awhile. I will write to my brother, in New York, proposing a visit for you; and, meantime, if Major Howard calls I will tell him you are engaged."

It was a hard thing for Julia, knowing that the man she loved was so near, to deny herself the pleasure of seeing him when he called that day; but she knew that her mother's advice was for the best, and so she implicitly followed it. Major Howard did not remain as long as usual, and an hour after, as Julia happened to be near her window, she saw him go by on horseback, in attendance on the carriage of Mr. Jones. Julia caught a glimpse of Mary within the coach, all smiles and satisfaction: and the poor girl threw herself on the bed and wept.

A week passed, and Julia saw no more of Major Howard. He had called twice, in the interval, at the Nelsons; but Julia had invariably denied herself. In consequence, several days had now elapsed, and he had not called again; but, every morning, he went by the house on horseback, in attendance on Mary. It was a melancholy week for Julia. She felt convinced that Major Howard was angry at her, for denying herself; and though she knew she was doing right, she did not suffer the less.

She was right too—he was angry. The first day he was a little annoyed, the second he was vexed, the third he was positively in a rage. The truth is Major Howard had found the society of the Nelsons unusually delightful: he was pleased with Julia especially, and he thought he saw that she liked him as a visitor. It offended his self-love, therefore, to be thus summarily dismissed. He never suspected the real state of affairs, but conjecturing that Julia found his society irksome, he proudly resolved not to trespass on her time again.

His mornings, accordingly, were chiefly devoted to Mary, who left no stone unturned to win his favor. She had lately heard of his visits to Julia, and hailed their cessation as her own triumph. Gratified vanity made her, for the time, more amiable than was her habit; and Major Howard was not far wrong when he thought her smile really sweet. Day after day, therefore, he continued to be her attendant: and, while with her, he was sufficiently happy. But, when night came, and he reviewed the events of the day, he could not but reflect, with a sigh, that the hours had left less contentment after them than when he had been accustomed to visit the Nelsons. He began, before the week was over, to pine after the society of Julia; and his anger grew less and less.

For he discovered that he was in love with Mary's rival; and that Mary herself had only dazzled him, for awhile, with her beauty. There was a boldness, approaching to vulgarity, about the heiress, which was repulsive to Major Howard; for though, generally, she contrived to adapt herself to what she saw was his taste, she could not always succeed. As the week progressed, and he was more constantly with Mary, this vulgarity became more perceptible. In short, every day's absence from Julia enhanced the charms of the latter, and depreciated those of the heiress. When Sunday came the lover had made up his mind how to act. "Julia, I fear does not love me," he said, "but I see now that I love her; and I will not lose the chance, however slight, of winning her. I will see her, tell her of my passion, and ask her to try me: perhaps she may accept me on probation; I used to think she was

pleased to see me. But, even if I fail, I will be no worse off than now; and, at any rate, I will not allow this foolish anger to keep me silent."

It often requires more courage for a man to open his heart to the woman he loves, than to face a battery; and so Major Howard found out. He had gone alone to church, on Sunday evening, much to the chagrin of Mary, who had expected him to call for her; but he wished to speak with Julia alone, and he knew he could not have a better opportunity than on this evening; for as Mr. Nelson generally accompanied his wife and daughter to church, the lover intended, when the services were over, to join the Nelsons and offer Julia his arm, a courtesy which she could not refuse, even if she disliked him. It was a bold and resolute determination, characteristic of the soldier. The event turned out as Major Howard had expected; Julia came attended by her father and mother: and when the congregation broke up, the lover took care to be near the door in order to intercept his mistress. He could, however, scarcely articulate Julia's name; and Julia, when she comprehended his meaning, was not less agitated than he.

Upon that interview we will not dwell. It is enough to say that the walk was so protracted that Mr. Nelson, after waiting half an hour, would have gone back to search for Julia, had not his wife, with a quiet smile, told him she was certain Major Howard was a safe escort. The truth was, Mrs. Nelson had, all along, suspected that the major loved Julia. But fearing she might possibly be mistaken, she would not, for her child's peace, hold out any hope to Julia. "If he loves her," she said, to herself, "he will find it out, and tell her so: if he does not, she cannot too soon forget him."

A glimpse at Julia's face, when the happy girl entered followed closely by Major Howard, revealed the state of affairs to Mrs. Nelson. The mother soon left the parlor, and was pursued by Julia, who, throwing herself into her parent's arms, sobbed the glad intelligence that she only wanted her father's and mother's consent to become the betrothed of Major Howard. Meantime the major seized the occasion of Julia's absence to tell Mr. Nelson of his hopes. In half an hour the whole family was re-assembled in the parlor, the lovers supremely happy, and the parents happy to see their children so.

The rage of Mary when she found that Julia had carried off the husband she coveted, we shall not attempt to describe. As she had really loved Major Howard, at least in her way, her disappointment was peculiarly poignant; but no one pitied her, for her rude and haughty manners made people generally hate her; and her parasites, who might have consoled her, dared not, for

the suspicion that she had been a rival of Julia, she now angrily repudiated.

Julia had been married about a week, and was already established in a magnificent mansion, for her husband was as wealthy as he was celebrated, when, one day, calling at her mother's, the latter pointed to Julia's elegant equipage, and said,

“Do you recollect, my child, a conversation we had, years ago, about keeping a carriage? I told you then that, though your father could not afford such a luxury, the truly refined would not think the less of you on that account.”

“I remember it, dear mamma,” said Julia, kissing her, “and I have found your prophecy right. You cannot tell how much good the conversation did me. I was fast growing envious and unamiable; but your judicious rebuke cured me. And, perhaps, to that very conversation I owe it that I now do ride in my carriage.”

“Always be as amiable, my dear, as when you had none, and I shall ask no more.” And, with these words, the mother kissed the young bride in turn.

MARRIAGE AND MISERY.

BY JAMES L. FUTHEY.

It would be well for those who contemplate entering into the marriage relation, to ponder well the old adage, "look before you leap." It is certain that by so doing many a luckless union would be averted—many a shattered heart preserved—and many of the troubles that afflict life in this world be unexperienced and unknown. Unnatural marriages are most likely to cause the deepest misery and suffering that the world is capable of engendering. It is opposed to nature that two persons differently educated—dissimilar in their thoughts, feelings, and disposition should dwell together in peace, love and quiet. Domestic bickerings must soon arise, and the once gay and cheerful heart be racked by incessant turmoil and contention. Matrimonial alliances should never be completed in violation of reason. Our passions are blind—incapable, themselves, of acting rightly; and they should, therefore, be, at all times, under the guidance of the moral and intellectual faculties.

Philip Harmen was the father of two as beautiful daughters as ever tripped the earth, or breathed the free air of heaven. The light of their sunny faces could disperse the gloom of the dreariest heart, and force smiles to rest upon the most stoical countenance. Few ever gazed upon them but felt happier by the sight; few were ever gazed upon by them, but a thrill of delight, such as they seldom felt, gave increased buoyancy to their spirit—a new delight to their being. The "admired of all admirers," it may readily be imagined that their lovers were neither "few nor far between." The father felt a noble pride as he walked through his mansion, the brightest ornaments of which were his two ever cheerful daughters, and a youthful feeling stole through his aged limbs as he watched them flitting, fairy-like, about in the discharge of their ordinary duties. Their mother had died when they were quite young, but she had already commenced instilling into their minds virtuous principles, and charged her husband in her dying hour not to forget their moral and religious training.

Time passed on. Her children grew up as lovely as they were virtuous—indeed, their virtues gave additional loveliness to their characters. Beauty is ever more beautiful when religion lights up the soul and sheds a hallowed illumination over the face. They received an excellent education—an education that fitted them to perform the various

duties of their sex skilfully and intelligently. When they had completed their studies and returned home ready to act their part upon life's eventful stage, their father deemed it a fit occasion to offer them some advice.

"You have now, my daughters," he said, "passed through the easiest portion of your life. Your path thus far has been strewn with roses. Hereafter you must expect to find thorns intermingled therewith. The cares of the world may press heavily upon your hearts, and put your patience and forbearance to the severest trial. But never despair. In adversity as well as in prosperity let all your actions be on the side of virtue. Show to the world that in all you do, you are actuated by a pure sense of right, and you will ever win the homage of the good. Forget not the holy lessons you were taught in your childhood, and remember that the last prayers of a fond mother were that her children might grow up virtuous and happy. Should you ever be disposed to marry, be careful above all things on whom you bestow your affections. Once united, you are united till death, and a wrong step taken in marriage cannot easily be retraced. Spurn the hand of every one whom you have the least suspicion of being tainted with vice, and let no feeling of love, however ardent, urge you on with recklessness in such a matter. You have been the joy of my life thus far, and I trust while it shall please heaven to permit me to dwell upon earth, I shall never be made miserable by seeing you unhappy."

We have already said the sisters were in no want of lovers. Beauty will win suitors even where there is not the additional attraction of virtue and wealth. Sarah, the younger, only laughed at her admirers; but Alice had a more sensitive heart. Her affections soon began to centre on a single object. One by one her lovers vanished, and William Welmar, for such was the name of the fortunate individual, had the whole field to himself without a rival.

Welmar was little worthy of Alice. He was deceitful and dishonest in the extreme. In his heart lurked all the bad passions of our nature. Yet he possessed an uncommon tact of veiling his ill qualities whenever it suited his purpose. Having been but for a short time a resident in the neighborhood where Alice dwelt, he was of course not perfectly known. His conversation

was graceful, and in the presence of Alice at all times of a moral caste; his demeanor courteous and elegant; and indeed he seemed in all things to possess the requisites of a kind, virtuous and affectionate husband. A few of Alice's friends (and all who knew her were such) who had casually noticed something of his true disposition, when informed of the match gave an ominous shake of the head, while others asserted that the day of her marriage would be a transition from bliss to woe; but none ventured the delicate task of remonstrating with her.

Mr. Harmen, however, watched with intense anxiety this play of love, and was extremely apprehensive lest Alice should give herself up to a man whose true character he seemed confident was not fully exhibited, and on whom he had ever cast a suspicious gaze. Alice judged by his movements at times he was deeply concerned about something, but little suspected it was she who troubled his feelings. But her love for Welmar was already too strongly fixed to be broken off by the entreaties of friends, or beseechings of a father—indeed she fairly adored him. Bright and glorious visions of the future floated before her imagination, and dreams of bliss higher than she had ever enjoyed sweetened her repose.

Not expecting any opposition in her matrimonial projects, she one day broached the subject to her father. His features, usually betokening inward joy, changed into an expression of anguish when he heard it, and he paced his room for a long time before he could find it in his power to speak. He said, at last, with evident emotion,

"Alice, you little know the pain your words have given me. I had feared you might fall a victim to the wiles of this man, and yet I hoped your good sense, your love of virtue, your desire to live happy in the world would restrain you from linking yourself to one who carries, at least, a doubtful character, and whose honeyed words may be but the promptings of a deceitful heart. By the love you bear your father—by your high respect for Christian principles—by your hope of future bliss, I conjure you to countenance him no longer."

"I have already vowed I would be his," was her calm reply.

"And now you expect my consent to the marriage. If you deemed it necessary to the contract why did you not consult me beforehand?" answered he, somewhat sternly.

"I had not looked for opposition, and am now surprised to find it. I have seen nothing that would justify me in discarding him, and no vague suspicions shall be permitted to snap the cord that binds me to him. Surely you place a wrong estimate upon him."

"No, I cannot; he is yet, as it were, a stranger

in the neighborhood—your acquaintance with him has been short, far too short to form that connexion with him you desire; and though he may have shown off a good character in your presence, he has exhibited a different one elsewhere. I have lately heard of some of his doings."

"From whom, pray?" was the sudden reply; "disappointed rivals have plotted some foul tale, and tattling lips, I fear, have borne it to your ears, and you have believed it. No! no; I am not to be deterred from marrying the man of my choice because the breath of calumny is blown on him from such a source—it only binds me the stronger to him." While there was something of indignation in her words, there was a touch of sadness in her voice as she spoke.

"Speak not thus, my child," was the father's answer; "tongues that would not causelessly denounce him have spoken it, and there is too much reason to fear that the half is not yet known. You have fallen in love with him at first sight; his prepossessing appearance has charmed you; you have given way to your feelings without calling in the aid of your judgment, and he found your heart a prize easily taken. He may prove a good husband, but you have no means of determining that he will. His acts are unknown, or where known, they decide against him."

"Is it thus that he is judged? No, I cannot believe that deceit could dwell in his bosom—that he could do anything wrong. If dark crimes had ever sullied his heart, his countenance could not wear so pure and peaceful an expression. Surely you will grant your consent," and her voice assumed a pleading tone.

"For you to marry this Welmar? Never! I do not wish to see you miserable. It is for your own good I withhold my consent. If you judge of one's character always by their outward actions and appearances, you have yet an important lesson to learn in the study of human nature. Remember now; my determination is fixed and I will not alter it—if you become wedded to him, and wretchedness be your lot thereafter, you may look to me for pity, but to heaven for forgiveness. It is a rash step you are about to take, and I have dutifully pre-admonished you."

She saw in his reply an inflexibility that it was useless to attempt to overcome, and resorted to no more pleadings, merely answering him thus:

"What then am I to do? Would you have me break a solemn promise?"

"You should not have plighted yourself thus unconditionally before seeking my advice. Better still to break your promise than live with a broken heart hereafter."

"Had I expected such an issue I would. But I have solemnly affirmed I would be his wife, and

I must abide by it. Never let it be said of me that my lips breathed a vow—that I gave assurances of attachment that an after course disregarded. Come weal or come woe, I am willing to make the trial."

Her father manifesting no disposition to reply, she soon after left the room. Much as it pained her to differ with him, her love was too substantially fixed on its object to be easily removed. Alas! for her delusion. Alas! alas! her disobedience.

When Alice next met her lover, she described to him the result of the interview; repeating, however, the strong attachment she still entertained for him. It was undesirable news for him, but bent on achieving his purposes, and supposing she would be prevented from wedding him in her own residence, he proposed an elopement, hoping, as is often the case, that a parental re-conciliation would take place a year or so thereafter; but her heart rebelled against such a proposition.

"No, that will not do," said she; "though his assent cannot be obtained, he will yet permit our marriage to take place in his own dwelling. I am free to act as I choose; and though my desires may not be in accordance with his, he will not, for that reason, completely frustrate them. In a few years you can live down the ill reports that malignant tongues have circulated against you, and those who now despise you will be forced to acknowledge your worth."

"But how unpleasant it is to dwell in a place where false tales have injured one's character. It checks one's aspiration to rise in the world, and deters that vigor of action which might else mark one's course, were only regarded with favor."

"Oh! let it not be so with you, dear William," was her fervent answer, "these calumnies will soon disappear before an upright course of conduct; you can be prosperous here in your business; here dwell all the friends and relations I have on earth, I do not wish to leave them."

Finding her impregnable on this point, he carried the subject no further. Had William Welnar possessed human sensibilities he would have colored with complete abashment, he would have felt the stings of conscience tormenting him unceasingly at the sight of such a noble-hearted, unsophisticated being reposing implicit confidence in his veracity, disbelieving the tales that had been sped abroad derogatory to his character, when he knew in his very heart they were founded in truth, and yet with a painter's skill gilded them over with the speciousness of purity and goodness. But "love is a credulous passion." A stranger would discover sad defects in a child, that the mother's affection would cause her to overlook; and so truly ardent lovers

are apt to be blind to the vices of their beloved, while their virtues ever stand out in grand conspicuousness.

A day was set apart for their espousals, and though but a short way in the future, time in the opinion of the two lovers never moved so tardily as then. Alice was correct when she said her father would permit it to take place in his own lovely abode. But it was a sad day to him, no joyous feeling bounded within his breast; no smiles rested on his furrowed cheeks. She too, though a bride, occasionally appeared sorrowful, and a keen observer at one time might have noticed a tear-drop coursing down her glossy cheeks, an emblem of imperfect bliss. Why was this? Because she was acting in opposition to her father's wishes: and she knew the painful feelings it occasioned him. But she had no power to act otherwise. Love, deep and strong, had taken possession of her heart, and nothing short of death could have parted her from him in whom her holiest affections were enmeshed.

We will now pass over a few years, during which the true and natural disposition of Welnar became gradually unfolded, followed by as gradual a lapsing into grief on the part of Alice. Let us take a view of her as she now appears in her own dwelling. Oh! mark the change in her countenance! How sorrowful she looks! Smiles no longer deck her face—the mark of anguish is there: and though that countenance once rivalled the sun in brightness, it has lost its gayness, and now more resembles the paleness of the moon; yet unlike it, whatever of brightness it possesses is not borrowed, but rises from her own soul long purified by religion, which ever gives to the human visage that holy light—that serenity and calm submissiveness in trial so comfortable with its nature. Anon, she casts a sorrowful look upon the infant in her arms, and then perchance weeps. Her heaving breast at times sends forth sighs loud and heavy; and that voice once so cheerful, has now a wailful sound. It is the darkness of night and she is alone—alone with a babe upon her breast, and a little boy playing by her side. Growing weary with his sport, he looks up, and in earnest tone says, "when will papa be home?"—that question stirs afresh the sad feelings of her heart and deepens her anguish. She comforts him with the reply that he will be home directly, but alas! the hour of midnight may pass and find her still alone. Where is he, and what can he be doing?

From what has already been said the reader will surmise the answer. We will, however, fully unmask Welnar's course of life, and openly expose to view, and the indignity of all the villain that arrayed in the garb of virtue, wrecked!

noble heart, and blasted forever the bliss that so pure a being deserved. He is a gambler—a drunkard—a profligate. Go to some tavern, or gaming den, and you will find him; these are his places of resort, of pleasure. There you will see him, reeling about a senseless wretch, or shuffling cards, while horrid oaths drop incessantly from his lips. The tongue that had once with apparent sincerity uttered vows of eternal fidelity to his still faithful, but unfortunate companion—that had once whispered in her ears sentiments of pure and unchanging love in words that seemed to have been caught from angel lips—now discourses in the language of fiends, and impiously connects the Almighty's name with curses that spring from an infuriated heart.

Yet he had a love for Alice; not the strong, pure, self-sacrificing love of a true husband, but that light, evanescent affection, that beauty and a graceful deportment is apt simply to inspire; while in the wealth she appeared to have at her command he foresaw a valuable aid in the dark undertakings he might afterward engage in. It was not her integrity of character—her high regard for truth and virtue—qualities that constituted her in these respects a pattern to her sex—that most enchanted him, for it would have been more fitting his disposition had she lacked in these, but it was those qualities which time hath power to destroy, but which long ere they were destroyed had ceased to exert their wonted influence over him, as his actions testified.

Alienated, however, from his old companions in iniquity, it had the effect of smothering for awhile the ill-desires of his mind, yet his old habits returned with all their original force as soon as he had found out new comrades fitted like himself for evil. Step by step he plunged deeper into that dread abyss that leads to eternal ruin. Do you wonder now at the misery of his unfortunate consort? The earnestness with which she beseeched him to abandon his wicked course—the tearful eye—the sorrowful, yet loving gaze into his face, as she plead with all the fervor of a woman's heart for his reform, would have drawn tears even

“From eyes unused to weep.”

We will attempt briefly to depict one of these scenes; it will suffice to show the general tenor of them all.

Returning home one evening earlier than he was accustomed to, and in a calmer mood than usual, she embraced the occasion as a fitting one to impress on his mind a consciousness of the evil he was committing.

“William,” said she, “a few years ago when we exchanged vows at the altar, I deemed you sincere in making them. Have you forgotten those sacred promises?”

“Have I departed from them?” he replied, coldly. “Have you not a good home?—have you ever been afflicted with hunger?—has your body been pierced by cold for want of sufficient clothing?—have these children ever suffered for want of any of the necessities of life? Indeed I think you are surrounded with all the comforts you could wish.”

“Comforts! speak not that word if you would not deepen the wound you have already inflicted upon my heart. What comfort can I have when sitting here alone in the still night, when the thought of where you are, and what you are engaged in, comes rushing with heart-breaking force upon my memory. True, I have never suffered with hunger or cold, but not to you do I owe entire exemption from these; but the agony of mind I have been compelled to endure because of you, is far heavier to bear than any mere bodily ill. And these children suffer too. The lessons of goodness they should learn from your lips are wanting, and I tremble for their fate when I see so bad an example set by their father.”

“Why, Alice, I am often detained on matters of business, and what if I do meet at times in a social gathering with a few warm friends, do you think me worthy of condemnation on that account?”

“Do not attempt to deceive me,” she answered in a mild, but firm voice. “Your ill-conduct oftentimes when you have returned home, testifies that you have been where no husband who regards his family, where no mortal who fears his God would ever dare enter. Faithfully have I endeavored to render you happy and comfortable in the world, but, strange as it appears, my devotions have awakened no corresponding affection in your heart. Heaven only knows what miseries the future may unfold to us if you persist in your course.”

“Come, come,” said he, in a somewhat harsh tone, “you must not indulge yourself in such thoughts. You have brooded over some little neglect I may have unintentionally shown toward you, till you have magnified it into an enormous crime. My actions are not half so evil as you imagine them to be.”

“Would to heaven,” was her fervent answer, “they were free from it altogether! I would then know something of peace; this sorrowing heart would then feel what it was to be happy again. But, oh! William, you gamble—you are addicted to the use of intoxicating drinks, and they are fast driving you on to ruin. The sad fate of others who pursued the same course should act as a fearful warning to your soul, and cause you to forsake the path wherein they trod. If not for my sake, for the sake of these

dear children, I implore you to desist from these practices. So full of wrath have you come home, at times, that now when your footsteps are heard by the door, little Horace runs and clings trembling to my side, hiding through fear of his own father; and even the babe I hold seems to cling closer to my breast, while every remark you utter is so tinged with profanity that they pierce my very soul like arrows. Little did I think when I became your wife that such would be your course. When reports defamatory to your reputation were then circulated I turned from them with loathing, and faithfully believed that time would prove them false. But, oh! how have I been deceived. You have proved a bane to me instead of a blessing, and were it not for these children I would woo the peace of the grave. If you entertain any kindly feelings toward me, show it by a change in your conduct. If you deem my life to you of any worth, let me not drink too deep of the cup of sorrow."

Appeals like these would somewhat touch his feelings, and he would make a slight promise to act better. A ray of hope would then beam in upon her soul; a few days he would preserve his promise; then again he would relapse into his old habits, and sorrow heavier than before would settle upon her heart. In fact, the passion of Welnar for liquor and gambling was so strong it was impossible for him to desist. It had become fastened upon his soul in early youth, and there, leech-like, it clung, so firm that a woman's tears—a woman's prayers—a woman's beseechings—the most powerful incentives to reform there are on earth—could not free him from it.

Friends, whose regard for Alice was strong, and who perceived the agony she was compelled to endure on his account, often approached him and remonstrated against his conduct, but their words only called forth curses. One, a near neighbor, who greatly pitied Alice in her distress, and whose heart was filled with just indignation at the course Welnar was pursuing, sought out his midnight haunts, hoping by confronting him there, and by stirring up in his mind a remembrance of his neglected family, to arouse a sense of guilt within his breast. He was found in a disreputable tavern. The friend approached, and in a stern voice accosted him thus:

"William, you have a wife that is entitled to your care, your protection, and your regard; you have children that should find in your life an example worthy of imitation; and here you are, distant from them at a time when you should be with them, bringing degradation upon yourself and disgrace upon them. If you were not devoid of sensibility the blush of shame would crimson your cheeks, if one manly feeling

permeated your soul—if one generous emotion thrilled your bosom, you would go home and ask the pardon of her you have so deeply wronged, and live a better life hereafter."

"Who gave you authority," was his angry reply, "to inquire into, and censure my conduct? I know how to conduct myself without the advice of such conceited simpletons as yourself."

"You know how to conduct yourself like a demon," warmly answered his reprover, "and had the advice that has oft-times been given you been heeded, you would not only have been a better man yourself, but you would have lightened the griefs you have inflicted upon your family."

"Cease your impertinent gabbling! I will let you know that I possess a spirit that will brook the chiding of no mean puppy like yourself," and a fiend-like laugh ran through the room, while the speaker's cheeks reddened with rage.

It was useless to waste words on such a being. Remonstrances against his deeds coming from persons whom he disliked invariably excited his ire, and urged him on with renewed fury in his career of crime.

But the end was not far off. He was in a gambling-room pursuing, as usual, his avocation; the stakes at issue were immense—the interest centered in the game strong—a dispute arose—angry speeches were quickly exchanged—a desperate fight ensued, and ere it ended William Welnar lay a senseless mortal on the floor. He was taken home. The application of proper medicines partially restored him. He could perceive his weeping Alice gazing upon him with a countenance full of affectionate tenderness, and using every endeavor to ease his sufferings; he could hear the sobbings of his eldest child who was sensible something fearful had befallen him, and doubtless he longed to speak. But death came too hastily upon him, and ere he had power to ask the forgiveness of her he had so greatly injured on earth, his spirit had taken its eternal flight.

When the day of interment arrived, and the people who designed witnessing his burial had assembled, an aged minister—the same venerable man that had years ago, when Alice lay like a smiling cherub in the arms of an affectionate mother, baptised her—the same minister that had joined them together in the holy bonds of matrimony, arose, and in a feeling manner addressed the assembly. He spoke of the life the deceased had lived—the terrible death he died; portrayed in thrilling language the awful effects of sin; and endeavored alleviate the anguish of the widowed mother by the blessed promises of the Saviour, and pointed her to that book that

contains a balm for every wounded heart—a consolation for every stricken soul.

Again Alice returned to the home of her father, but alas! not as she left it. Then she was a bright and happy being—all smiles—all cheerfulness, with a spirit as light and joyous as heaven ever deigned to an earthly mortal; but though the rose had nearly faded from her cheeks, and her eyes were dimmed in their brilliancy, there was a beauty about her still, and the Christian-like resignation that lay upon her countenance gave her the appearance of an angel smitten with grief. She had looked forward to the enjoyment of years of increased bliss, but had reaped in its stead harvests of disappointment and woe. Truly

has it been said, “we know not what a day may bring forth.”

What does our story prove? That the purest and holiest beings on earth will sometimes err in the bestowal of their affections. They give way too suddenly to the first feelings of the heart, and permit the passion of love to carry them whither it may.

Love is a pure and holy feeling, yet needs reason as a pilot to steer it aright, but how frequently is that pilot discarded, and thus the frail bark of humanity is tossed impetuously on the rough sea of life, and, perhaps, shattered upon the rocks that folly has planted therein!

MINNA CLAVERS.

A SEQUEL TO THE WIFE'S REVENGE.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

CHAPTER I.

It was with wildly throbbing hearts that the two fair fugitives found themselves journeying from the city which had been productive of so much sorrow to both. Minna thought not of the future; it was shrouded in a thick veil of mystery, which it seemed impossible to penetrate; and casting aside all other considerations, she turned with a new, delightful feeling to the mother, whose image had so often mingled in her childish dreams.

But Mrs. Clavers, even while she folded her daughter to her bosom, felt agitated with conflicting thoughts. She had obtained her child, the thought of which often came encouragingly upon her when overwhelmed with doubts and difficulties—she had accomplished the revenge for which she steadfastly toiled—the proud man was humbled—brought to her very feet, and his jewel wrested from him—and yet she pondered and hesitated. What course should she pursue? Should she seclude her daughter from all contamination with her own course of life—carefully guard her from all association with the world, *her* world, and thus insensibly teach her to look upon her mother with distrust—to draw a line between their respective pursuits, and have no sympathies, nothing in common? She could not do this; she could not bring her child from her early home—cut off all former associations, with nothing to supply the void thus created. And yet could she expose that daughter in all her purity and innocence to the contaminations of the play-house? Should she mark out for her her own course of life—doom her to become the slave of the public? How would that proud head bear to bow in humble acknowledgment to galling patronage? How could she with her timid, retiring manners, gain sufficient courage to arrest the attention of an audience? And yet on the other hand as she gazed upon Minna's lovely face, her kindling features, with their ever-varying expression, and observed the grace and elegance of every movement, an emotion of fond pride came over her, and she would picture her daughter attracting the eyes and admiration of all—now wrought up to enthusiasm with the wildness of passion; and again subduing with the melancholy of despair. In what had *she* suffered during

her career? What had *she* lost in flying from the man she hated, and entering upon the brilliant course which she had made peculiarly her own? Was not her fame untarnished even in the eyes of the censorious world—was her name ever associated with those of her profession who were a disgrace alike to themselves and others? They had no relatives, no friends but those she had made—they had severed all ties save the one that bound them together, and what should they care for the opinion of others? The beautiful young actress might yet wear a coronet—such things had happened before—and they could then look down upon those who had hitherto despised them. Ah! Minna Clavers, beautiful and unsuspecting one! a tempest is gathering about you.

Often in the still watches of the night when Minna, slept serenely, a mother's form bent over her couch, and she would come to gaze upon her treasure and assure herself that it was safe. Warm kisses were pressed on the unconscious brow, and often a tear-drop fell unheeded on the sleeping face. She could not come to a conclusion; she would dwell almost bewildered upon the bright prospect, where stood Minna, the queen of light and beauty—but then as she gazed upon the sleeping figure of her child, who had left all for *her*, a remembrance of that autumn night at the theatre came across her mind, and she could almost hear the whisper, "*mother, is this heaven?*"

They arrived in London; and Minna who had often dwelt in fancy upon a voyage to the scene of all that was renowned in history or tradition—where riot, bloodshed, and pestilence have exercised their sway—where royal heads have bowed to the block, and noble hearts have suffered martyrdom—whose very walls whisper tales of crime and mystery, and horror, now felt almost bewildered as she stepped, for the first time, upon a strange land and a strange scene. The home of the actress was in one of the most retired and aristocratic streets; and Minna experienced an undefinable sensation of gloom as she entered its quiet precincts and contrasted its appearance with the glare of the city she had left. The solemn-looking houses towered up before her in dark masses, and seemed frowning at her for the step she had taken—scarcely a ray of sunlight rested upon the gloomy stone—the atmosphere

was foggy, and the sky of a lead colored hue. No wonder that on that first night of her arrival she felt cut off from all; every face looked cold and unpromising, and throwing herself into her mother's arms she wept bitterly. Mrs. Clavers, too, felt a strange chill on returning to the land of her adoption; but concealing her own feelings, she endeavored to soothe the agitated Minna. She took her around the spacious house, and opening one splendidly furnished room after another, succeeded in interesting her attention. At an early hour the two retired to rest; they could not bear to be separated in that great, lonely house, and mother and daughter shared the same couch.

The door of the beautiful actress was soon besieged with visitors and friends, who joyfully welcomed her back. The star had returned to its orbit, and people again crowded to hear, admire, and wonder. To fuller audiences than ever were the scenes rehearsed which never failed to win applause; and completely carried away by the glare and excitement, Mrs. Clavers lived but on the smiles of the public; praise, flattery, admiration had become necessary to her, and she drew long draughts of the exhilarating nectar. Minna, in the meantime, had been carefully secluded; few knew even of the daughter's existence, and still fewer had seen her; but those who had were loud in praises of her beauty, and strange reports circulated around until the actress' house was enveloped in a cloud of mystery.

The first effect of this new page in her life, and the excitement of being restored to a long-lost mother had now almost worn away, and Minna began to see things with the reality of truth. She felt anxious about her mother, whose spirits were sometimes depressed almost to melancholy, and then, excited by the glitter of the evening, she became wild, brilliant, and reckless in her gaiety. Excitement was doing its work upon her; and Minna often beheld, with alarm, the languid pallor of her countenance at the breakfast-table, while her hand shook nervously as she lifted her cup, and scarcely a mouthful of food passed her lips in the morning. She blushed deeply, when one evening while watching the progress of her mother's toilet, she saw the color which had faded from her pale cheeks supplied by artificial means. Mrs. Clavers saw the blush which rose on her cheek, while the eyes drooped timidly beneath their long lashes; but the practice had now become so habitual that she quite forgot her daughter's presence. A feeling of degradation came over her, and she almost shrank from Minna's glance; but, recovering herself quickly, she said, with a smile—

"Deceit, Minna, is the world's atmosphere; I

could not appear before my admirers with these pale cheeks—instead of feeling grateful for this proof of my assiduous efforts to please them, they would transfer to some rival the praise which now constitutes my daily food."

Minna made no reply, but watched her mother with a painful interest as she proceeded to attire herself in her dress for the evening. She appeared that night in the character of Medea, and the heavy velvet robe, the flashing jewels, and radiant appearance, struck the daughter with a feeling of sadness, as she mentally contrasted them with the morning's habiliments. Mrs. Clavers took Minna to the theatre with her, and left her in the drawing-room. The young girl experienced a sense of humiliation as she beheld her mother tricked out in the robes of the tragedy queen, and following the beck of others. Even the thunders of applause that shook the very house, grated painfully on her ear; and covering her burning face with her hands she wept silently. No one heeded her, and she had forgotten time and place; but suddenly a footstep sounded near, and her mother stood before her.

"What, *tears*, Minna!" exclaimed Mrs. Clavers, "what is the meaning of this? Has any one offended you, child?"

She looked up, and her eyes were almost dazzled by the brilliant figure before her. The face was triumphantly beautiful; the applause which resounded on all sides had lighted up her eyes with a radiant glow—excitement had tinged her cheeks and lips with a deeper hue—and the splendid robes and triumphant air invested the whole figure with a regal power. But although splendid, it was a painful sight for the daughter; and, falling at her feet, she exclaimed:

"Mother! dear, dear mother! Do lay aside these hateful robes, and be yourself again—I hardly know you thus! Give up this horrid life, which is killing you by degrees, and let us seek some retirement—anywhere from this hateful glare and bustle!"

A sudden pallor overspread the countenance of the successful actress at her daughter's passionate entreaty; but turning from those pleading eyes, she murmured: "I could not give up this exciting life, and live in retirement—do not ask me, Minna. Besides," she added, in a low voice, "what would support me without it?"

"Do not speak of that, dear mother," said the daughter, sadly, "I would do anything—everything! I will work—go out by the day even, and you shall stay at home and be waited upon."

"These hands, Minna, do not look much like work," replied her mother, as she took one of the soft palms in hers. "And you little know, poor child! of what you speak. To those brought up in luxury poverty appears as a sort of romance,

if to be endured for those they love, but how different this is from the reality! No, no, Minna—I have seen more of the world than you have, and poverty appears to me with a sufficiently ferocious aspect. Come, child, the carriage waits; go to sleep, and forget all this romantic nonsense."

Mrs. Clavers was in one of her bright, sparkling moods that night, and stepped gaily into the carriage; but Minna followed with a heavy heart, unable to suppress a sigh as she thought of the future. Happy are those who do not see behind the scenes!

CHAPTER II.

THE winter had passed lingeringly away, and sweet spring hovered about the dim old city. To the petted heiress, who had just entered upon a round of gaiety before leaving home, it had been a season of uneventful seclusion. She read in the papers accounts of balls, routs and parties; but the gloomy streets resounded not with the voices of their merriment—the thick walls gave back no echo of music's strains—all seemed shrouded in mist and silence. The carriage of the actress was sometimes seen in Hyde Park, and then noble heads were bowed in salutation, and lofty plumes waved condescendingly, but they were not for *her*—not a face or feature awakened memories of the past or loved associations—and Minna leaned sadly back in her silent corner, unknown, unnoticed, uncared-for. She saw the turf green in the porch, the light, gossamer foliage drooping in sprays from the waked-up trees, heard the carolling of birds from their gilded prison-houses, and knew that it was spring; but a cloud hung ever over the gloomy city—a cloud rested heavily on her heart. She turned from the blank around her, and sought refuge in books. The library was well-stocked with plays, romances, and the works of the quaint old English writers; but of books the good had ceased to interest, the instructive to please—and day after day sat Minna Clavers absorbed in the pages of fiction, roaming at large in an ideal world of her own.

One bright morning Mrs. Clavers stood by the open sash, while the sweet breath of spring fanned her pallid cheek, and played with the rich masses of dark hair that were straying from beneath her cap. She was thinking how very beautiful is earth; but sometimes when the sunshine rests brightly on all around, and sweet sounds and bright faces are heralding in the season of joy and gladness, visions of a dark, narrow resting-place will rise up and fill the soul with sadness, for it is hardest to die when all looks beautiful around—when every feeling clings still more fondly to earth. As if in accordance

with her thoughts a sweet strain rose tremblingly upon the air—a low voice of thrilling softness chaunted the "Lament of the Irish Emigrant." Oh, there is nothing like a sweet voice! It wraps the very soul in a state of bewildering pleasure—it softens the harsh, and melts the gentle heart. Tears, *real* tears dimmed the eyes of the actress, memory carried her back to the days of childhood and innocence—days when she would have indignantly spurned the idea of becoming what she was. Often had she warbled that very song for her kind, loving father; could the shade of Justus Clark now behold his daughter what would be his feelings? Or at evening could he recognize in the tricked-up actress, whose province it was to deceive, the little, innocent Minna—the light and sunshine of his home? Blessed are the dead who sleep and have no knowledge of what passes around them!—they rest in blissful unconsciousness.

Mrs. Clavers stood listening to the strain which the birds seemed to take up and echo, and then another melancholy lay, and yet another rose upon her ear. The songs were all sad—not one merry note broke the sorrowful harmony; and soon the slight figure of Minna passed beneath the window. As the bright sunshine rested on those flowing tresses, and lit up the youthful face into a glow of dazzling beauty, while the sweet notes still rose and fell upon the air, a new thought came into the mind of the actress; and she stood and pondered while watching the retreating figure.

"Minna," said her mother, that evening, before dressing for the theatre, "do you sing? I have heard no music, except *paid* music, for a long time."

"Yes," replied the daughter, "I sang when at home for my——" *father*, she would have said, but recollecting herself, she left the sentence unfinished, and burying her head in her mother's lap sobbed convulsively.

"She wants excitement," thought Mrs. Clavers, "to make her forget this haunting past, and she must have it. But will you not sing for me, Minna?" continued her mother, "I love to hear low music at twilight—so dry these tears, child, and sing to me some sweet, wild strain."

Minna smiled sadly, and with a steady effort succeeded in banishing all traces of sorrow. But old remembrances almost overspread her as she proceeded, and the suppressed emotion lent a tremulous sweetness to her tones that rendered them still more thrilling. The actress became lost in a pleasant dream. It seemed as though she had roamed to some wildly beautiful spot, and seated in a sunny glade by some rushing waterfall, a spirit-bird whispering sweet songs in her ear, and lulled her to sleep with snatches

of wild and beautiful melody. The twilight deepened around, and still Mrs. Clavers sat wrapt, fascinated by her daughter's wondrous powers. Minna's voice had been the pride of the school, and a source of never-ending pleasure to her father, who almost lost his spirit of calculation while under the influence of those thrilling tones. It was indeed marvelous in its sweetness and compass; it was one of those voices that entrance the hearer at once, and make him fear lest it should cease.

After "Auld Robin Gray," "The Old Arm-Chair," and "Highland Mary," the mind turns to earth and common-place almost with disgust; and Mrs. Clavers sighed deeply as she laid out the evening's habiliments, while the bright glare of candles put to flight the soft, subdued tints of twilight.

"But, Minna," said she, "what a very melancholy taste you display, child. Have you nothing brighter, more lively to entertain me with? These sentimental, pining words have almost given me the horrors. Come," continued her mother, as she glanced at the French clock on the mantel-piece, "I have still half an hour to waste in listening to sweet sounds, before I am doomed to hear the scraping of the orchestra, so take your seat at the piano, child, and let us hear what you can produce."

Minna did as she was directed, and at first her hands glided listlessly over the keys; but the familiar sounds soon roused her from her apathy, and the bright flush came into her cheek, and the sparkle to her eye as of old. Her whole soul was in the performance, and Mrs. Clavers listened in perfect astonishment. She had heard the instrument touched before by those who were considered masters of the art, but never with the skill and execution displayed by this young girl.

"Minna," exclaimed her mother, in enthusiasm, "you are a prodigy! a fortune! Display these talents to the public—do not suffer them to lie unnoticed and unknown, and the fame of the youthful cantatrice will spread itself over Europe. Think of the prospect that awaits you!"

Minna turned very pale, and leaned heavily against the instrument. She had not been prepared for this new trial—she had not even dreamed of such a possibility, and now it had come suddenly upon her. Her eyes were fixed upon her mother with a pleading, half-reproachful gaze, and Mrs. Clavers well understood their mute language. She sighed as she proceeded to dress herself, and this sound of quiet grief almost made Minna waver. She glanced at her mother, and asked herself what right had she to refuse to exercise her talents when that mother toiled night after night uncomplainingly? But then the stage rose up before her, surrounded by

a horrid sea of faces; she fancied herself failing, hissed at, insulted; and almost in turn she exclaimed:

"Oh, mother! do not ask me *that!* anything but that! I should only disgrace you."

"I do not fear *that*, Minna," replied her mother, with a smile, "that threat has not the least terror for me. But make yourself easy, dear child," she added, in a tone of tenderness that went to Minna's heart, "you shall do nothing against your own will and choice. I did not dwell for years upon the thought of having my child with me, to make her life wretched to her."

The carriage was at the door; the noise of wheels died away in the distance, and Minna sat bending over the music. It all looked hateful to her, the notes seemed staring at her forebodingly, the piano assumed a threatening appearance, and she almost regretted that she had ever learned to distinguish one tune from another. But then the tone of her mother's gentle, "bless you, Minna!" came over her almost reproachfully; she thought of that mother's fading appearance, and a hollow cough which had now and then fallen upon her ear sounded like a knell. What if the fate of the desolate should be hers? A stranger in a strange land, what would become of her?

Mrs. Clavers beheld her laurels fading. A rival had divided the honors with her; and who, in addition to talent, possessed the charm of freshness and novelty. Hers was a totally different style, and the public seemed almost to forget their old favorite in their homage to the new. It was hard to take from her the very breath of life, for so had admiration now become, and she felt it most acutely. She kept her troubles to her own bosom, but Minna saw that something weighed heavily upon her mother's spirits, and the petted child of wealth and luxury now passed many sleepless nights.

Mrs. —, the actress, who had been the early friend of Mrs. Clavers, and the companion of her flight, now returned from a long and successful professional tour; and came one evening, soon after her arrival, to the house of Mrs. Clavers. Minna was seldom visible to her mother's visitors, and now remained in her own apartment; while the two sat talking over old times and present prospects. Mrs. — seemed nearer to her than any one else she knew, and to her Mrs. Clavers freely unburdened her mind.

"This acting is wearing, toilsome, ungrateful business," she sighed. "Little do those who are so fickle in their applause deem of the aching hearts, the midnight hours, and the harrowing cares of those who win it! And then after years of toil and trouble, to behold the admiration which becomes necessary, as it were, to one's

very existence, bestowed on another! Oh, I know not what to do! Sometimes it seems to me as though I should almost lose my reason."

"Do not speak so," said her companion, kindly, "for losing your reason, *chère amie*, would be a great injury to yourself, and of no sort of benefit to any one—the best course to pursue would be to bring forward something new in opposition to the attractions of this rival. The life of an actress is, as you say, a toiling one; it is not sufficient that she has acquired a high reputation in any particular branch—she must be continually on the strain to take advantage of every change of opinion, and put down all competition."

"Alas!" murmured Mrs. Clavers, "I have nothing new to offer. I have tried my utmost, and now feel almost discouraged."

"Where is your daughter?" asked the actress, "did you not bring her with you? If beautiful and talented," she continued, "why not introduce her to the public, and teach her to supply your place? A new face and a young one would be a feather in your cap. Miss —— would then be obliged to look to her own laurels, instead of robbing you of yours."

Mrs. Clavers now spoke of Minna without reserve. She told the actress of her marvelous beauty, her wondrous powers, and her horror and repugnance toward the course of life proposed to her. Mrs. —— could not understand these scruples, she could not imagine that a young, obscure girl, with every advantage for the stage, instead of courting notoriety and fame, should actually *refuse* it! It was a mystery—a wonder; and as much out of curiosity to behold such a person as to hear her vocal powers, she asked Mrs. Clavers to bring her down.

Poor Minna! she almost felt as though her fate were sealed, when her mother entered her apartment and delivered the request; but in submissive obedience she proceeded to the drawing-room. Mrs. —— was charmed, enraptured, astonished; every style was executed with truth and simplicity, and yet with a beauty of expression seldom equalled. They sat there till a late hour listening to the bird-like strains; and on parting for the night, the great actress observed in an expressive whisper to the anxious mother:

"Bring her out, and your fortune is made!"

That whisper sealed the doom of Minna Clavers.

CHAPTER III.

THE two were alone in Mrs. Clavers' dressing-room. The mother sat absorbed in a silent reverie with her eyes fixed sadly upon her daughter, while Minna remained pale and silent. Each wished to break the silence, and yet each lacked courage to make the attempt.

Mrs. Clavers felt at length that she *must* speak; and in a voice of touching melancholy she said: "Do you know, Minna, that for sometime past I have been troubled by the thought, that were I to be taken from you, you would be thrown helpless upon the world? Upon the world of *strangers*, Minna, and that is a hard and an unpitying one. An angry father would not receive you: cold faces would greet you on every side, and I blame myself for taking you from your luxurious home. It was wicked—it was selfish in me. But do not turn so pale, Minna—I did not speak of leaving you yet—it may be many, many years—I only spoke of what *might* happen."

The full lip quivered, a paroxysm of agony contracted the fair young face, and Minna wept in loud and uncontrollable grief.

Mrs. Clavers was almost frightened at the depth of the feelings she had awakened; and tried unsuccessfully to soothe the agitated girl.

"Minna," said her mother, at length, "these fine, sensitive feelings which the least inadvertent jar disturbs, will, if not restrained, cause you many moments of suffering, my poor child. They will find no echo in another's heart—the world cannot understand them, it will trample on and wound them, as rough footsteps crush the timid flowers—they prevent enjoyment of the present and heap up misery for the future. Whatever you do, do not give way to them—you had better be a block, a stone, than a person of sensitive feelings. They are brought more into play by solitude and an inexperience of the world; a life of excitement is better for you in every way, Minna."

Poor Minna! she had become trembling and nervous; a period of constant anxiety and trouble had weakened her spirits and energy; and throwing herself at her mother's feet, she exclaimed: "do with me as you please!"

"My own one!" murmured Mrs. Clavers, with a burst of feeling, "my bright and beautiful one! The neglect shown to the mother will now be amply repaid by the admiration bestowed on her child."

Yes, it was summer. The foliage on the trees had deepened and thickened—the turf was of a darker hue—and the creeping ivy at the back of the house almost concealed the dark-hued stone. There was music too in the lonely house; notes, now high and playful, now low and sad, melted upon the air, and filled the atmosphere around with an incense of melody; and a fair young figure flitted to and fro, and gleamed in its white dress amid rolls of music and heavy instruments. It was Minna, but the face was pale, and the soft braids of hair assumed a darker hue from contrast with the marble brow. But she toiled on and uttered no word of complaint; she passively

went through heavy lessons from dull professors, obeyed the orders of those who came to weigh her talent in the balance with gold, and endured their comments with statue-like apathy. She trembled though as she looked forward; her mother's spirit had become fairly radiant with excitement—she listened to these beautiful tones, heard the approval, the admiration of cities, and grew almost dizzy with anticipation of the fame and glory that spread away in the distance.

But Minna had many misgivings; the evening that approached with rapid strides was to her a fearful ordeal; she feared that her mother had overrated her powers—she feared failure, disgrace, and trembled to think of its effect upon her who seemed to regard it as the gate through which they would pass into a new and beautiful existence. And she leaned her head on the slight hands and thought until her reason was almost bewildered; she could scarcely realize it that she, Minna Clavers, the heiress, should in one short period be torn from a home where all had been *her* slaves, to become the slave of others. It must be a dream—a wild delusion of the senses; but as she glanced tremblingly around, the rolls of music and all the hateful et ceteras of her profession mournfully assured her that it was indeed reality.

The evening came at last; and the youthful cantatrice was almost wild with fear and excitement. Mrs. Clavers could hardly contain herself; her brilliant anticipations were now about to be realized, and she hovered about from one thing to another in a tumult of delightful confusion. Mrs. —, the actress, had come to encourage the young debutante for her first appearance—lights blazed in every apartment—servants were hurrying to and fro—and all was bustle and confusion. A new opera had been written for the night; managers doubted not the effect of the youthful songstress—the beautiful daughter of the equally beautiful “Mrs. Walton”—and Minna, at the commencement of the piece, was to make her appearance in the character of an ocean nymph, emerging from a large cave, and astonish the audience with a burst of melody. Excitement was at its height; flattering rumors of the young cantatrice had floated about, and a brilliant crowd impatiently awaited the moment of her debut.

Minna stood tremblingly before the mirror arrayed in the airy habiliments of her character; clouds of white, of the most fairy texture, floated about her graceful figure, and she reminded the gazer of some faint star, or a sweet glimpse of moonlight. But the youthful heart was throbbing wildly; all looked dark before her, and it seemed impossible to endure the stares and comments of a whole assembly.

“Now, Minna,” whispered her mother, as she kissed the pale cheek, “let us again hear the opening song before you go.”

A burst of melody filled the room; the notes seemed even sweeter, more thrilling than they had been before; and the actress glanced at the proud mother with a look that spoke volumes. The arrangements were all completed, the hour had come, and Mrs. Clavers stepped into the carriage, the happiest of human beings.

The house was completely filled; every corner seemed taken up, and people spoke of nothing—thought of nothing but the young debutante. She was represented as more beautiful than the evening star, with the voice of a Siren, and the face of an angel; and hundreds of eyes were fixed on the provoking curtain that concealed all from their sight. What a brilliant assemblage it was! Plumes waved, and jewels flashed, and beautiful faces gleamed out from the crowd in restless impatience.

The curtain was drawn up; an ocean scene appeared in sight, and from the cave emerged the heroine of the night. A slight, girlish form that seemed almost lost amid the space—a face of dazzling loveliness—and a pair of dark, brilliant eyes, that now wore the expression of the startled fawn, gleamed upon the audience. Never had so lovely a cantatrice appeared upon the stage; never had beauty of so high an order gleamed out from the habiliments of the actress; and Minna was almost deafened by the applause that greeted her appearance. It would slacken for a moment and then be resumed with increased force; peal after peal reverberated through the house—jeweled hands flung bouquets upon the stage—and even the cane of royalty mingled in the noise. They seemed to forget that they had come to *hear*—a sight of the songstress roused the wildest bursts of enthusiasm. Mrs. Clavers remained behind the scenes, and the sweetest music never fell half so melodiously upon her ears as all this din and racket.

At length it died away for the songstress to commence, but Minna moved not—uttered not a note. The orchestra repeated the part, but still she remained silent. The audience, pitying her youth and confusion, encouraged her with another round of applause; a low voice whispered: “*Minna!*” and roused by the sound, she opened her rigid lips, and endeavored to proceed with her part. But no sound came forth; she tried again, and the dreadful truth fell darkly upon her—*she had lost her voice!* One wild, despairing look to the audience—a scarcely-breathed murmur of “*mother!*” and the young debutante sunk back in the arms of the manager. A wild shriek rose upon the air, but it came not from Minna—she had lost all knowledge of the present in

blissful unconsciousness. The audience were disappointed, but pity predominated over anger—the rumor soon reached them that terror had destroyed the voice that was to have fascinated them as with a spell, and they returned home—still haunted with the remembrance of that beautiful face.

CHAPTER IV.

How many, many different scenes are crowded together within the precincts of a large city. Suffering makes us selfish, and those who have beheld the stars of their hope descend below the horizon, do not consider that the sun sets as darkly upon them—that the shadows and the cloud rest upon other hearts. There is a small room, an artist's studio in an unfrequented part of the city where we will now alight, and read the dark pages in the history of him who sits absorbed in tracing the tints upon his canvass.

Walter Lynde had been from childhood the sport of fortune. Winds that brought joy and gladness to others scattered aside his slightly-built castles—hope rose upon him in tints of gold and crimson, and faded amid the thunders and tempest—loving faces passed away from earth, and long-tried friends grew cold. He was a child of genius, rocked in the cradle of poverty, and fanned by the breath of misfortune. Sometimes the clouds cleared up from his sky, and displayed the gold and azure beneath—but this soon faded into greater darkness than before. He had been a lonely wanderer without father or mother, sister or brother upon the face of the earth; dragging out a weary existence amid the unvarying routine of a country school, where he was half teacher and half scholar, until at length an unknown uncle came from the East Indies; a mother's brother supposed long since to be dead, but now in possession of an inexhaustible fortune—homesick, eccentric, and high-tempered. He found out his sister's child—took him from his drudging employment—and introduced him to the luxuries and elegancies of life. These were halcyon days for Walter; he was no longer an outcast in the world—he had found some one who loved him, and devotedly did he love his uncle in return. He loved him, not for his wealth—he never even thought of that—but for his kindness, his indulgence, and consideration for the lonely orphan. He appeared to him in the light of a good and powerful spirit, who had changed his gloomy life to a sphere of existence, beautiful as it was unexpected. His refined tastes were now cultivated—his talents brought to light—and his wishes indulged.

He was sculptor, painter, and poet. Often at his dingy desk in the lonely school-room, after his troublesome charges had retired, did he sit

for hours and while away his cares by writing verses which breathed of genius and poetry, with nothing to rouse inspiration save the bare rafters overhead, and the rough desks and benches that surrounded him; but now a softly carpeted room, where the light came mellowed and subdued, luxurious chairs and couches, and a complete writing-table of beautiful workmanship, materially assisted his flights of genius. His uncle, to be sure, was not very deeply imbued with the spirit of poetry, and was apt to be rather dull in comprehending the sentiments thus breathed forth in verse; but if not intellectual, he was kind, and “as long as it amuses the boy,” thought he, “why let him scribble on.” It was during this period that Walter began to appreciate the works of Canova, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and the hosts of sculptors and painters who have given immortality to former ages; his uncle could scarcely distinguish one piece of art from another, but he had come home determined to spend his money like a prince, and the first step toward this was to procure a handsome house and fill it with fine furniture, statuary, and paintings.

In this congenial atmosphere the germ was developed; and Walter came forth a regular genius. All he said, did, or wrote was very much admired; he had as yet requested nothing else for his efforts, and people were not disposed to refuse praise to the heir of the wealthy East Indian. He was feted, courted, and caressed; his days glided on in beautiful harmony, every one seemed kind and affectionate, and he began to be ashamed for having abused the world even to himself.

But his tide of prosperity was not of long continuance. A few thoughtless words, incautiously dropped in a moment of excitement, were repeated, with various additions, to his uncle by some kindly disposed friend, and so twisted and distorted as to present a very different meaning from their original one; a coldness ensued, of which Walter tried in vain to discover the cause, and then his uncle began to assume toward him a petty tyranny, a contemptuous sort of patronage which galled his proud mind and sensitive feelings. As long as favors were bestowed from affection, he felt no scruple in receiving them; but when he was made to feel his dependance his spirit revolted at the idea. Several hints and angry speeches at length opened his eyes to the fact that his uncle suspected him of looking forward with pleasure to the time when he should enjoy unrestrainedly the whole of his hard-earned wealth. The indignant hue crimsoned his very brow as this mortifying idea for the first time rushed upon him, and he immediately sought an explanation with his uncle; but the old man had been influenced by false friends and advisers, and regarded his nephew's frankness

upon the subject as another proof of his worthlessness.

The fatal words he could not deny; a high spirit on one side, and a hasty temper on the other, are not the best requisites for healing a difficulty—and the uncle and nephew parted. Poor Walter! he had imbibed a taste for luxury and expense, and now found himself again thrown upon the world, with his condition even worse than it was before. Then he had known only hardships—now he had experienced a different life, a brighter side of the picture. He went, however, with confidence in himself; he felt deeply grateful for his uncle's kindness, but all explanations that he could now offer would be accredited to mercenary influences—he resolved, therefore, to toil quietly on until he had reached the bright eminence of wealth and fame which his summer friends had always held up as the reward easily attainable to talents such as his, and then go to his uncle and be forgiven. He could not refuse him then—he could not *then* suspect him of interested motives—and this prospect it was which inspired him with energy in his new misfortune.

But he, like many others, soon found that talents which had been admired in a gold setting, lost half their lustre when taken from the frame. Friends in prosperity proved strangers in adversity; he, who had hitherto been besieged with visitors and invitations, now found himself with scarcely an acquaintance in the world. He had written a book of poems, but although publishers admired them, they were afraid, they said, to risk their production; he had spent hours of midnight toil and daily labor over a picture which was sent to the exhibition; but it did not gain the prize—it did not even attract attention. It was really a production of talent, but it had come unrecommended—he had no influential friend to open the eyes of the managers to its beauties; so it was placed in a bad light, and pronounced a failure. He produced two or three pieces of statuary which were really fine compositions; but those who came to look at them saw so many alterations and improvements to be made that in seeking to please one he would spoil them for another. From time to time he received sums of money, which were enclosed in a blank envelope without word or signature; but he well knew the source from whence they came, and appreciated his uncle's thoughtfulness—for had it not been for these remittances, he would indeed have found himself in a destitute condition.

But what is it that he is just now so enthusiastically absorbed in? His fine, expressive face bespoke an intensity of purpose, a concentration of ideas upon the subject in question that shows it to be a very interesting one; and soon a distinct

set of features appears upon the canvass. They look familiar—it is the face of Minna Clavers! But what is she doing here in the artist's studio? Listen, and you shall hear.

Reports of the beautiful cantatrice had penetrated even to his retired dwelling; the love of music was an inborn propensity of his nature, and resolving for one evening, at least, to break through his clouds, and seek enjoyment in recreation, he proceeded to the opera. He might better have staid away, for this only added another to his catalogue of trouble. The vision of the youthful songstress enchanted him; he too waited with impatience to hear the first notes from a mouth of such perfect beauty, and beheld with disappointment and horror her sudden illness and abrupt retreat. His soul was filled with a vision of beauty; he returned home, but the lovely form of Minna floated even in his sleep; it was impossible to apply himself to his usual studies, and at length he sat down and gave way to his inspiration. As he proceeded smiles played around his mouth, and he became absorbed in drinking in the vision of beauty that beamed before him. The same look, the same expression; and day after day he worked on. He had traced out the abode of the actress, and now and then obtained glimpses of a sweet face in the garden or at the window, which materially interfered with his studies.

He had worked at his portrait now for some time, and it was almost finished. He had not asked himself what he meant to do with it, or whether it were not madness in him to spend time and thought upon a face which never could be to him other than a creation of the pencil. He was an enthusiast—a dreamer; and wrapped up in the delightful present, troubled himself not with the future.

He sat one morning, with his brush and easel lying by his side, absorbed in contemplation. His eyes were intently fixed upon the dark orbs that beamed upon him from the canvass, and fascinated his very soul with a strange power; and he sat silent and meditative—lost to all outer things. He did not see the door of his studio open—he did not hear a footstep close beside him—and the intruder too remained and gazed; but on his entrance a hasty start, a rapid scanning of the portrait and the painter, and a softened look which gradually stole over his features betrayed his emotion.

He advanced still closer to obtain a full view of the face, and Walter saw with surprise that a dark shadow intervened between him and the object of his contemplation. He looked up in some anger at the intrusion, and his eyes rested upon a face in whose deep lines he could still trace a resemblance to the softened features upon the canvass.

Walter remained for some moments almost bewildered, scarcely knowing whether this was a delusion of the senses or reality. He had heard no sound, no footsteps, seen nothing until the figure stood before him, and the whole occurrence appeared to him in a strange and mysterious light. He did not speak; he hesitated to question his strange visitor, but remained silent, with his eyes fixed upon his face, employed in tracing the strange resemblance which grew stronger every moment. The face before him was not a pleasant one; there was something repulsive in its expression, even though softened almost to tears; and he sat waiting in some awe for the stranger to announce the purport of his visit.

Duncan Clavers had almost forgotten the young painter, and his own strange intrusion, in his surprise on perceiving the features of Minna reflected before him; but at length he turned abruptly to Walter, and said, "young man, I must have this picture."

Walter, rather disconcerted by this curious mode of address, was yet provoked at the cool impudence of his visitor, and resolved not to part with the cherished portrait, he replied quietly, "it is not for sale."

The piercing eyes were turned upon him with a threatening glance, and Duncan Clavers asked peremptorily, "how came this picture here? Tell me where she is!"

"I have not yet recognized your title to question me thus," replied Walter, with dignity, "and I do not choose to make this lady a subject for comment with every one. Tell me first who you are, and what right you have to ask these questions?"

"I am her father," was the reply, in so sad a tone that it quite touched Walter's heart.

"Her father!" What could be the meaning of this mystery? Would the chapters of wonders never cease. He had heard reports of the virtuous actress, Mrs. Walton, had often attended the theatre with his uncle to witness her representations, but no one had spoken of a husband—she was always represented as a widow; and indeed fashionable circles had often commented upon unexceptionable offers of marriage she had received, but mysteriously declined. The whole affair was incomprehensible. But he did not question his visitor, or doubt his assertion—the resemblance between the beautiful portrait and his harsh face was a convincing proof of that; and in explaining to him how the portrait came into his studio, he gave the whole history of that eventful evening.

The proud features of Duncan Clavers contracted as with a spasm on hearing of his daughter's public display and defeat; and, unable to

suppress the signs of the emotion that convulsed him, he covered his face with his hands and remained silent. Walter pitied his agitation, and yet endeavoring not to notice it, he employed himself in arranging his implements.

But his visitor at length recovered his self-possession, and in a subdued tone he said, "you must pardon my unwarranted intrusion and abrupt questions, which at some other time I will endeavor to explain, but tell me now where they are? I must see her!"

Walter placed aside the portrait, and leading his visitor from the studio, the two proceeded together toward the abode of the actress. All looked hushed, gloomy and lifeless; scarcely a sound was to be heard in the gloomy street, no form flitted to and fro within, and impressed with the gloomy stillness, Duncan Clavers remained for some moments in the spot where Walter had left him.

Duncan Clavers had staid on in his desolate home with feelings of anger cankering about his heart, as he brooded over the wrongs which had made his house desolate. The varied phantoms of the past came rising up before him, even in his dreams; and he would see the fair, sweet face of Minna Clarke as she first beamed upon him in her youthful beauty—and then it changed to the face of his daughter—his Minna, who looked lovingly upon him as of old—and he would stretch out his arms to embrace the figure, but then it faded away—and he would awake to find that he had grasped a shadow.

Dark visions came over him in his hours of solitude; and he thought of the bullet and the poisoned bowl. Life became a burden; and yet he shrank from the grave of the suicide. Even in his desolation and despair the regard for appearances exercised full sway; he could not bear to sink in the estimation of the world—to tarnish the name which had ever been associated with ideas of honor and justice. The thought of Minna still haunted him; he tried to shake it off and feel indignant at her desertion; but he did not till now know the depths of his affection for her—even he himself was surprised at its intensity. He could not live without seeing her; her mother might die and leave her destitute—and although he tried to satisfy himself that she deserved it, the idea of his tenderly-nurtured child contending with poverty and want—left alone in the world of strangers, put his philosophy to flight. Perhaps too some feeling of remorse toward the fugitive wife may have softened his heart.

The newspapers told him of the destination of Mrs. Walton, the actress, and swallowing down pride, anger, and revenge in one tremendous effort, he arranged his affairs and took passage for England. He too was a stranger there; with

no society except that of his commercial correspondents, he occupied himself with rambles about the great city in hopes of discovering his daughter. Chance had led him into the studio of the artist, and his emotions on perceiving the portrait of Minna were almost overpowering. There was a new struggle between pride and affection on hearing of his daughter's public exposure—but the good spirit at length triumphed; and he found himself standing before the very house which contained the object of his search.

Public report had told him of the illness of his wife, and he stood almost undetermined about entering the house. Should he ring for admittance the menial would only repeat their order, to refuse visitors, Minna would not come to see him, and her mother would probably have him ordered from the house. He mounted the steps; the door had been left unfastened by some careless servant—it closed noisily—and advancing on tip-toe up the thickly-carpeted stairs, that gave back no echo of his footsteps, he passed on unnoticed to the sick chamber, and remained for a few moments motionless amid the folds of drapery.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Minna Clavers returned to consciousness on that fearful night she was summoned to the sick-bed of her mother. Poor Mrs. Clavers! the shock had been too much for her. Her hopes were raised to such a state of exaltation, that when the crisis came it left her bereft of consciousness, reason, almost of life. One wild shriek of despair rang fearfully around, and the crimson blood came pouring from her pallid lips and stained the brilliant robes. She had broken a blood-vessel, and lay all that long night in a state of insensibility; while the innocent, heart-stricken cause kept an unremitting watch by her side.

She did not die yet—she recovered for a season; but she could not move from her apartment, and day after day, and night after night Minna continued at her post. Oh, there is nothing so crushing, so overwhelming in its sorrow as the watch by the bedside of a loved one, our all perhaps upon earth, to see the eyes grow dim, the lips colorless, and the form reduced to a shadow! To hear the hum of the busy world without as each one proceeds on his pathway regardless of the lonely heart that sadly watches the expiring taper—or at night when a fearful stillness reigns around, broken only by the slow, distinct striking of the clock that remorselessly when in the last hour of life to the dying one, to sit and commune with your own thoughts, and gaze sadly forward toward the dull blank that spreads away in the distance.

Poor Minna! she was stupefied by the blow. She did not speak—she scarcely even thought; it seemed like a horrid dream, till she looked upon the fading figure and saw that it was no illusion. It seemed hard that she, the innocent one, should suffer for the errors of others. Her hitherto luxurious and carefully guarded life had but illly fitted her to bear the storms of adversity; she idolized her mother—loved her as she had never loved before; she had dwelt upon the thought of her from early childhood, and now it seemed impossible to part with her. Mrs. Clavers never complained—never told Minna that the scene at the opera had been her death-blow—but the poor girl knew it nevertheless; and this knowledge increased her agony. She wished that her mother had never cared for her—never sought her out and taken her home with her—since it had only destroyed herself.

The bright star had flitted from its sphere, but it left not a vacant place; the new candidate for public favor had glided quietly in, and “Mrs. Walton,” the beautiful, the caressed, was scarcely missed. The theatre was again filled with bright and blooming faces—with rank, and beauty, and splendor; again the walls resounded with the enthusiasm of a delighted multitude; the new favorite came forward, brilliant and smiling—the former idol languished on a bed of sickness.

The room was dark and close; through the gloom Duncan Clavers distinguished at length the outline of a reclining figure upon the heavy couch, while a slight, youthful form was almost concealed by the thick falling curtains that shaded the window.

“Minna,” murmured a languid voice.

The young girl glided quickly to the couch, and bent over close to the speaker.

“Sit down, Minna, close beside me—I wish to talk to you. I ask your forgiveness, dear one, for bringing you to this—for taking you from one who not only loved you, but had the power of rendering your life happy, to share my unsettled fortunes. The thought has often weighed heavily upon me, and I feel that I have done wrong; even my love was selfish, for instead of seeking the good of its object, I devoted myself only to my own gratification; and now that I am dying, Minna—”

“Oh, mother! mother!” sobbed the poor girl, in uncontrollable agony, “do not drive me distracted! I cannot listen to these dreadful words—cannot believe them!”

Mrs. Clavers was faint and exhausted, almost terrified by the violence of her daughter's grief; but she felt that the time had now come when all illusion must be swept away—she had done with the stage and its mimic pageantry, and now looked steadily forward to the truth and the right.

"You cannot remain here in a city of strangers," she continued, "and although it has been an effort for my pride, I have written a letter to your father—to *my husband*—entreating him to receive and cherish his child—explaining to him that the fault was entirely my own, for I it was who took you from your home; I alone am to blame."

"No, mother," replied Minna, in a tone of decision, "I am to blame, if it was wrong to leave a father who had treated you so shamefully—driven you from your home and your child! Let me cast the letter into the flames: for I had rather earn my daily bread than appeal to the mercy of a father who has so outraged and insulted you!"

How the heart of Duncan Clavers throbbed within his bosom as these words fell upon his ear! He trembled from head to foot, and even the silken drapery became agitated by his emotion. To hear his conduct condemned by the lips of the child whom he had idolized—whose life he had endeavored to make a dream of brightness, struck him with all the force and reality of truth. *She* could not be influenced by any selfish feelings; and for the first time the proud man experienced a pang of remorse.

"Minna, Minna!" said her mother, earnestly, "do not speak so, I entreat you! Feelings such as yours have brought me to this; have placed me upon a couch of sickness, from which I shall never again rise—and made my child a wanderer and an outcast. I sought revenge and I obtained it—but I have sacrificed my own life and my child's happiness in the struggle. Oh, why was I ever born with such intensity of feeling? But it was hard though to see the love which I had given him in all its strength and freshness thrown aside and trampled upon as a worthless thing—to hear the taunts and revilings, feel the petty, stinging mortifications which were heaped upon me because the wealth for which he sought me had passed into other hands! I have sinned deeply, but I was not the aggressor; even on that fatal night when I tore myself from my child and all that bound me to home, a single word or look of love—even a softened tone would have turned me from my purpose!"

He could not remain there longer; a new light was breaking upon him—and standing suddenly by the couch, with a face pale and ghastly with conflicting emotions, he said in a tone of intense earnestness, "Minna Clavers, is this true? Assure me on the solemn word of a dying woman, as you hope for forgiveness hereafter, that it was really love which prompted you to marry me—that it was the want of this which drove you to commit an act that will ever be reflected on me and on your child!"

So sudden and startling had been his appearance that Minna stood gazing vacantly at him, unable to speak or move; but Mrs. Clavers was too exhausted to be surprised; she answered as quietly as though they had not been parted for years—as though there had been no hate between them—no feelings save those of love and friendship.

"I have spoken, as you say, upon a dying bed, and my answer now is but to repeat what I have just said. I thought that you *knew* this—thought that you deliberately trampled upon feelings of whose depths you was well aware."

"I never even suspected them; I thought that you had only married me for my wealth, and why should I waste love in return for such affection?"

There was a silence; a new light had come upon both, and they remained communing with their own thoughts. The stern man stood there, to all appearance immovable; but a conflict was raging in his bosom—a conflict between pride and duty. It would have been easier for him to sweep by handfuls his wealth into the sea—to bear unflinchingly any infliction of bodily torture—even to come down from his high estate in the eyes of men—but he did it at last.

The flood-gates of pride and anger were overflowed—the strong man was subdued; and sinking down by the bedside, he murmured, "Minna, forgive me!"

A wan, emaciated hand gently parted the hair from his brow, and leaning forward with a smile of perfect sweetness, Mrs. Clavers pressed a kiss of love upon his pallid face, as she whispered,

"Duncan—my husband!"

The next moment he gazed upon the face of the dead.

CHAPTER VI.

WALTER LYNDE sat in his solitary studio, dwelling mournfully upon the past. Pictures and statues gleamed out amid the space, each one of which told its own mournful story. How many hopes had sprung to life as these chiseled limbs assumed a being and a shape beneath his skilful hand—how many bright fancies had glided into his mind with the beaming skies that glowed upon the canvass—how many cheering fires had been kindled over each successive production, by the dust and ashes of whose expiring embers he now sat mourning in sadness of spirit.

Thoughts of the old school-house, and his dry, chilling life there came over him and wrapt him in a cloud of bitter fancies; he must return to it—must become again the wearied drudge, and toil beneath a darkened sky where no glimpse of sunshine ever penetrated. He gazed at his pictures as though they had been the production of another, placed them in every advantageous

light—and then examined and criticised his statues, read over his poems, and wished that he had been the world to reward the young artist as he deserved. Then he thought of that beautiful face which had cheered so many lonely hours, and, turning to the picture, he uncovered it, and stood wrapt in a blissful dream.

But then he remembered the events of the day; he thought of his visitor, and the unpleasant idea flashed upon him that he must give up the portrait! He had no right to keep it—to paint it at all, and of course no father would allow his daughter's picture to remain in the studio of a strange young man. He began to wonder how the adventure would turn out; if the beautiful actress would die and what then would become of her daughter? Her father would probably take her to some other scene and land, and he would never behold her again! What would he have given to be again restored to the pleasant home from which he had been so summarily expelled—to plead his love to the haughty-looking father as the heir of the wealthy East Indian, and not as the poor young artist. But then he almost smiled at his castle-building as he remembered that the beautiful Minna herself was probably not even aware of his existence.

The shades had deepened into twilight, and our artist was so much given to dreaming and leaving his door unfastened, that it was fortunate for him that none but friends ever felt a disposition to enter. His dream was now suddenly broken by an old, familiar voice, which exclaimed in hearty tones, "come, Walter, my boy, shall we go to the theatre?"

He started and rubbed his eyes, and then peered into the gloom, where he at length distinguished the well-known figure of his uncle, who again addressed him as though they had been separated but a few hours. "What, not dressed yet? Why, what does the fellow mean?"

Walter sprang from his seat, and in another moment had seized the old man with a grasp that well attested the strength of his affection. "Oh, uncle! can I really believe my own eyes and ears, or is this only a delusion to torment me?"

"*Delusion*, indeed!" repeated the old man, in a tone meant to be gay, though the tears were rolling down his cheeks, "your grasp, young man, does not appear to me in the least delusive. Do, pray, take your hands off of me, and we will leave this dismal den."

But Walter, although delighted at the prospect of a re-conciliation, was not so easily thrown off and on from mere capriciousness; and his tone may have had something of pride in it, as he said, "I am glad to see you, sir, and feel deeply grateful for your former kindness, but until I am

assured that you have laid aside your former unjust suspicions I cannot enter your house."

"So—you are standing upon your dignity, are you?" replied his uncle, while a certain feeling of satisfaction arose within him at this manifestation of spirit. "Well, suppose now," he continued, "that I was to invite you into my library in place of this dingy hole, to hear an explanation of my 'unjust suspicions,' and then leave you the choice of going or staying—would you refuse?"

The artist left his dreams and his studies, and soon found himself within the spacious mansion which had been the scene of so many happy hours. The library looked like an old friend with its wax lights and glowing fire; and in obedience to his uncle's request, he sank into a luxurious seat, and awaited his explanation.

"Walter," said the old man, suddenly, "you are a noble fellow. Many a nephew in your situation would have meanly cringed to my insults—would have sacrificed truth, honor, and self-respect to regain my forfeited favor—and endured every species of slight and degradation I chose to heap upon him. You have acted differently—you have shown yourself worthy of my confidence, and you shall have it. This has been in part a trial of your real sentiments; for although at first I experienced some real anger, as was natural in a hot-tempered old fellow like me, it was by no means fanned into such a flame as I represented it to be. I spent many years in a foreign land, away from home and friends; I went there a penniless boy—I came back a wealthy man—but I left much behind me that wealth can never restore. I left the pure freshness of youth, the confiding trust in others, the unconsciousness of deceit and guile which are the attributes of happy boyhood—and received in exchange my first lessons of worldly wisdom. I loved one who proved false to me—I trusted in a friend who deceived me—I bestowed favors on those who cheated and wronged me. I came back a sour, crabbed, mistrustful old man, a stranger in the home of my boyhood, with no friend or relative in the land of my birth; till at length I found my sister's child, dragging out a weary existence in the confining limits of a country school. I loved you, Walter, from the first moment that I glanced upon your face; but I had become wise now: I had heard of young, dashing nephews who considered rich, old uncles an encumbrance, a restraint upon their enjoyment, and I resolved to be upon my guard. Your thoughtless words, which were probably exaggerated by the disinterested friends who repeated them, roused this feeling in my bosom, and for some time I gave vent to it in no amiable manner; but even then your perfect frankness and freedom from suspicion had their effect upon me. I

resolved to try you still further, and saw you depart in pretended anger; but I took good care to learn your destination, I have not since lost sight of you, and endeavored to prevent you from starving on your poetry and pictures. Now, Walter, say that you forgive me; dinner waits for us, and an article in your room has been removed, your old uncle is the same as ever—will you go or stay?"

What poet, painter, or sculptor could resist so many combined allurements? *It was* unromantic, unpoetical; but Walter acknowledged to himself as he entered the comfortable dining-room, that luxurious common-place was really better in the substance than unsatisfactory romance. That night a fair young face mingled in his dreams, and he wondered if he should again behold his strange visitor.

Duncan Clavers remained beside his dead wife absorbed in many painful reminiscences. He gazed upon the wreck before him, and then the bright, joyous face of Minna Clarke rose up in its young loveliness, and reproached him for his conduct. Such feelings were quite new to him, they had long been strangers to his bosom, and brought up before him his early love and Anne Wincot. *His two victims!* The victims of his pride, and selfishness, and love of gold, seemed gazing up at him with their pallid features.

That hour in the chamber of the dead was a solitary one. It held up before his eyes as with a mirror the many scenes of his former life, and threw out in strong relief his own unworthiness. He had almost forgotten his daughter, till a convulsive sob fell upon his ear, and turning he beheld Minna standing motionless at the foot of the couch. He held out his arm, saying, "you will not now spurn your father from you, Minna? The dead have forgiven—should the living be less merciful?"

Minna cast one glance on the still, beautiful features that reposed in their calm unconsciousness, and then sunk into her father's arms. A compact was entered into between the two in that chamber of death, and father and daughter were nearer to each other than they had ever been before.

The young painter went daily to his studio, in hopes of again meeting his visitor; but still he came not, while the portrait remained in its old place. The newspapers announced the death of the beautiful actress; and he feared that the

father had departed to another land, and taken his daughter with him.

Sometime passed; but at length a gentleman one day entered his studio, accompanied by a lady dressed in deep mourning, whose features were almost concealed by a thick veil. It was his former visitor; and Walter, at his request, uncovered the picture.

"See, Minna," said her father, with a smile, "I have had a portrait taken of you without your knowledge. Are not the features and expression perfect?"

Minna threw aside her veil, and though the face was very pale, Walter immediately recognized the beautiful features that had floated through his dreams. A deep blush rose to her cheek as she gazed in surprise at the portrait, and then turned to the painter.

"How did you paint this?" she exclaimed, "I have never sat for my portrait since I came to England."

"I painted it from memory," was the reply.

The young girl was agitated with a painful emotion. He could never have seen her except on that fearful night, and the remembrance filled her with sadness. Duncan Clavers noticed his daughter's agitation, and closed the interview as soon as possible. The picture was placed in his possession; and the young artist received permission to call upon them soon.

It would occupy too much time to follow them through the whole process of courtship, betrothal and marriage. Suffice it to say that although Walter gave up the picture, he gained the bright original; but he accompanied them to America before the ceremony was performed, for Minna could not bear to make new ties where everything reminded her so forcibly of the departed one. During the last two years she had passed through a new existence; suffering and care had taken from her spirits their childish tone, and a tinge of melancholy ever rested upon them, even in her brightest moments. The old East Indian soon followed them; for as he said, "he was now a stranger everywhere, and it made not much difference in what place he took up his abode."

Duncan Clavers never became a perfect man. His old failings were habitual to him—his sternness still clung to him, although somewhat softened down by the lesson he had received; but before many years he too passed to the spirit land.

THE FIRE-FLY.

BY CAROLINE CHESEBRO.

"Oh, not for wealth, or fame, or power,
Hath man's meek angel striven,
But, silent as the growing flower,
To make of earth a Heaven."—EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

"A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."—BIBLE.

"WHAT a beautiful bride," was the involuntary exclamation that broke from many a lip, as Mary Wraith, leaning on the arm of her young husband, William Werne, passed along the aisle of the village church to the carriage which stood in waiting.

The bride was certainly very beautiful, though now her face was very pale—it had none of that glow of health which it usually wore: but Mary was a mourner even on this her marriage day, and long watching and final bereavement had written a sad story on her sweet countenance. She was dressed in white, (but without the ornaments or tinsel, which we all know become the youthful bride so well) having for William's sake, rather than for her own, for she had none of superstition, merely laid aside for that day her mourning garments, to re-assume them on the morrow.

During the last week Mary had followed her father to the grave, and she was now an orphan. Long had that parent been the object of her constant care and devoted affection, for he was both father and mother to her, Mrs. Wraith having died in her own fair youth, while her child was an infant.

It seemed as though the hand of Providence had guided the hearts of these young beings toward each other, that they might in union support each other in the dark hour of misfortune.

Not many months since William Werne had come back to his native village, a ruined merchant. He had been gone from home but three years: after a sufficient experience in the employment of another, as his father imagined, it was thought advisable for the youth to go into business for himself—and he had such a bright and hopeful spirit, was so full of the energy and ambition of youth, that the old man who looked on him with pride and admiration could not doubt of his success.

But that very energy and ambition had carried William too far: it was not possible that he should long cope with rivals whose fortunes were established, who in the ranks of trade could stand unmoved by the most adverse winds. But a

shock came that threw all our young merchants' business into confusion so inextricable, that he saw no way but to act on his first impulse—he hastily retired to his father's house burdened with mortified pride, and the many debts whose pressing and binding nature he keenly felt.

Captain Werne was an aged, retired officer in the army, who for deeds of valor performed in his prime, had been granted a pension by government. He himself had counselled his son to a mercantile career, and to establish him in business had advanced the little fortune which he had accumulated in past years—and also he had used his influence with personal friends to obtain loans of money for his son. The failure, therefore, fell with heavy weight on the old man, and when too late he wondered at his own shortsightedness in calculating with such certainty on William's success in a path so hazardous.

It was a dark day when the old and the young man stood together in their home, looking over the dismal and perplexing business accounts. But neither of them hesitated in the course they should pursue. They were honorable men, and they resolved to give up all to their creditors at once, and then by renewed and ceaseless exertion to labor in order to liquidate these debts.

The lovely place which the captain had spent years of pleasant leisure in beautifying, was given up without a regretful word; though his heart was sorely torn that day when he left the home which had been so dear to him, and to the young daughter of his heart, who had lived and died there. And by his brave example the old man cheered his somewhat fainter-hearted son.

Captain Werne went then to lodge with his old friend Johnson Wraith, and Willie again left the village to accept a clerkship which had been offered to him in another town. When, some months afterward the young man went back to the village to attend to his father's funeral, when he listened to the comforting words which Mary spoke to him in his great affliction, and saw the tears which she wept for him, the thought which for years had hovered over his mind in dim shadow became suddenly glory-hued, and

he knew that he loved Mary Wraith; and his manhood rejoiced in that hour of enlightenment.

Two years after his father's burial he stood in turn the comforter of the orphaned Mary. It was while her father lay dead in the little parlor, prepared for burial, that Willie said to the sorrowing daughter in a tone of voice that betrayed no passion or worldliness, but calmly solemn, as was meet to be heard in the chamber of death,

"We whom God has sorely and often bereaved, who by His providence are now left without father or mother, brother or sister, or fortune, should we not be *all in all* to each other? We have no riches, and there is little prospect of worldly joys before us God knows. I foresee only a life of constant labor, and have scarcely more than one hope, to die freed from debt. The home I can offer you is a poor one, such as I never thought to offer any woman, but if a true and loving heart is anything to you at this moment I pray you accept mine, for I dearly love you, Mary."

If in the midst of her deep sorrow a ray of light penetrated the gloom of that bereaved woman's heart, forgive it, reader. If there was a sudden uplifting of the dreary cloud which showed the blue sky bathed in sunlight beyond, do not condemn; if there was an instantaneous realization of the command, "Let there be light" in her soul, pardon my gentle-hearted one, for it was God and not man who gave the consolation—it was Mercy that sent her peace and hope when she was drinking of the cup of bitterness. It was His loving kindness which joined those hearts together by the couch of the dead, in a bond that was to prove life-lasting.

And, certainly, it was in no spirit of indecent haste, that a few days after the funeral of Mr. Wraith, William Werne and Mary appeared before the parish minister to be married, and of all who looked upon them as they knelt at the altar, there was not one to utter, or even to think such a wrongful thought. In their poverty and bereavement all felt it to be well that they should stand together for life. Even the prudent ones, though they knew the deplorable state of Willie's affairs, said nought uncharitable when he took to himself the beautiful, destitute orphan; they felt indeed thankful for her, that so kind and dear a friend had been given to her in that day which had else been a day of utter desolation.

After their marriage the young couple left the village immediately for the town where Willie was employed—their future dwelling-place. They had no time for merry-making, even had the inclination not been entirely wanting. It was late in the night when the carriage which conveyed them to Greendale entered that town. All was darkness around them, there was neither moon nor stars visible, but such a multitude of fire-flies darted

to and fro in the distance, that one looking upon them had thought a city illuminated was near at hand.

As they drove up the street to their destination the bridegroom exclaimed, "I would to heaven, Mary, that I were conveying you to a better home. May God defend you from ever looking back with regret on the deed recorded this day of us. It almost seems as though it should be a day of fasting and prayer, when such as you and I are bound together. With those who have always looked want in the face, it is different. They are accustomed to it, and have been educated, so to speak, for it; but *you*, oh, Mary! But I love you, I love you, my dearest, and I will move heaven with my prayers to keep me always above temptation. I swear to be always worthy of you!" And he clasped her passionately, and with tears, which the wife saw not for the darkness, to his breast.

"Willie, Willie, darling, do not talk so! Worthy of me! oh, let us only live true to each other and to God, and He will always help us. You give me yourself—it is enough. I have never hoped for riches—I am able to work, and I shall be no drone in our little hive, believe me. Look, Willie! do you see those myriad fire-flies? they look like burning stars—they dash to and fro like meteors, they make light in the darkness. My husband; perhaps I over-rate my strength—I may never prove to you as steadfast and bright as the moonlight, I know I am weak and inefficient, but I will be your fire-fly, I will always try to make light in our house be the clouds above and around us ever so dark. Love is brave, and after all what is there in life so very terrible, if we only make truth our watchword—then if all earth forsakes us we shall find One who is more than earth for our friend—His smile is better than riches—His loving kindness better than light."

"Amen, my Mary!" was the husband's softly and cheerfully uttered response, as the carriage drew up before the humble lodging-house where he had engaged a room for himself and his bride.

On the succeeding morning Willie immediately entered on his duties in his employers warehouse, and Mary buried herself in arranging the few articles of furniture she had kept for their own use, after the sale which had taken place at "Sunnyside"—and by noon there was a cheerful home-look in the humble apartment, that made it at once dear and beautiful as a long-sought land of promise to Willie, when he went home at noon. The piano which had been her mother's Mary had kept, a precious keepsake of other days, as well as a means of help in their time of adversity. It was her plan to instruct in music, which she was amply capacitated to do, and in this way,

as also by her needle, she knew she would be able to pay her own way well.

And it was so.

There were never any household debts outstanding against young Werne, never any board-bills to be paid. It was the wife's ambition to have her husband's efforts unshackled, as they had been before he married her; that their dwelling together might prove a mutual encouragement and a solace in hours of relaxation from duty. Was not this a noble ambition?

For months all went on smoothly and well. The life of these two, thus far, had been it is true no summer dream—neither was it all a winter storm. They had each other, health and strength, and for reasonable beings that surely was enough.

There were many young men employed in the establishment where Willie was at work, who had not the saving and restraining power of a virtuous woman to influence them—they were gay youths, with whom to "eat, drink, and be merry" was all of life. Willie was high in favor with them all, and they admired and respected his beautiful and industrious young wife. They had no wish to lead him astray, they had no desire to tempt him; for they knew his poverty, his struggles and liabilities, and they honored him for the brave heart his wife had inspired in him.

But they tempted him once—though thoughtlessly—and that was a night of woe indeed! There had been all day a great press of business, and near midnight when the account-books were at last closed, and the warehouse about to be deserted, a glass of "strong stuff" was passed round to refresh the wearied workmen, and to brace them against the cold and storm without.

That single glass of unwonted stimulus was like fire in Willie's brain. After he had parted with his companions, but before he had accomplished half the homeward way, it had paralyzed him—he was utterly incapable of proceeding, and in the darkness and frost he fell upon the pavement, a pitiable object indeed. Through all that night Mary kept watch—anxiety and terror kept her wide awake, for of the real cause of his absence and long tarrying she had not one faint suspicion. Shortly after sunrise Willie appeared, leaning on the arm of a friend, unaffected then by the fatal contents of that single glass, but ruined in constitution from the long exposure!

There had been in him from his boyhood a tendency to rheumatism in its worst form, and this night had terribly developed it. During the remainder of the cold season he was almost entirely helpless—he could not venture beyond his door; nor in any way labor continuously or profitably. Then the place which he could no

longer fill in the counting-room was supplied with another hand, and it only remained for the young wife to renew her labors with increased courage—to enlarge their sphere; this she did, and her heart never failed her. But William became—as a chained lion in those days of grievous trial. "This was a cross too hard for him to bear," he said—and it was not borne with patience. He still hoped much from the warm weather when it should come, but when the sun smiled at last graciously on the earth, it gave to him no restoring power—no healing influence.

Then Willie wept, for all along the thought of spring had been as a thought of heaven to him—he had prayed and panted for it, believing it would restore strength and vitality to his limbs, and alas! when summer came and passed away, it left him as it found him, a cripple still. Then vanished that thought of restoration, that blessed hope of labor and final freedom from all indebtedness to his fellow man.

And yet for all this misfortune, the Lord seemed in those days to have shed the light of His countenance on the soul of the striving wife. With her constant and laborious exertion Mary's strength increased, and was firmly established. The medical aid they were able to command, and much did Mary deny herself to secure this for her husband, was attended with no lasting benefit: all the *remedies* physicians could suggest were utterly beyond their reach. It is an awful union this of disease and poverty! Yet there was a thought constantly cherished in the wife's mind that was an unfailing source of joy. Slowly she was accumulating a little sum which would one day secure for her beloved a place in an establishment, where such diseases as his had in many cases met with cure little short of miraculous. Oh, how much there was in life for Mary Werne! How rich was she, living with an object to attain! Truly they who do not bitterly suffer, can never know the blessing of a great hope!

The care of Willie was in itself a great care; one from which many a woman would have shrunk—it demanded time that was most precious, and strength and patience—but Mary's heroism was of the most exalted character, and the all-beholding Spirit who saw her labors and her poor reward, knew that she had "well done," and in those days it was surely written of her, "she shall enter the joy of her Lord."

In the second winter after Willie's misfortune he had so much regained the use of his hands as to be able to hold a pen, and the wife had in several offices found for him occasional employment as a copyist—and finally she succeeded in making a permanent arrangement with a person who was touched by the simple story she told him of her husband's misfortune.

The "dew of youth"—that which is in itself youth—want of harsh experience, freedom from care, and pressing thought—that youth with which years have nought to do, had now faded from the brow of the husband and wife. They were both grown old.

It was ten years after their marriage that they sat one winter night resting from their labors, and talking of the past. William had now become reconciled by long deprivation to the loss of that freedom of limb which he had once known, and it did not now so afflict him as it once had. He had learned some admirable lessons from his wife in those years, and not the least of them was patience—holy patience—the power to "suffer and be strong"—to prove himself *thus* nobly and truly great, was now his destiny.

The hope Mary had long cherished of a final and complete cure in her husband's case, was somewhat daunted. The little she had been able to lay by in all those years for meeting the necessary expenses of one who goes abroad in search of health, was far from the sum she had mentally proposed to furnish him; and when at last she mentioned the subject to William, he put it at once away, saying they would "learn to labor and to wait," for other things pressed more heavily upon him than mere physical pain. First, he would be freed from the bondage of debt, then it would be time to shake off the bonds of sickness.

That night in winter when they sat together, conversing about the years that were gone, was Christmas Eve. They were comparing the record that it gave them with the past troublous times, when a letter was brought in for "Mrs. Mary Werne." It was opened with wondering interest and perused, shall I say how? Very little correspondence had been kept up by William and Mary with any of their old friends or neighbors, and of the communications addressed to them, very few had more favorable contents than a stern, "pay me that thou owest." But this letter! it was a gospel indeed to that striving pair; its contents were surely "glad tidings of great joy!"

Shortly after William had been so sorely smitten by disease, an aged man who had lost much by his failure, called upon the debtor in no very amiable mood, in order to receive from him some surety of the debt; his heart was touched by the suffering which met his eyes, and by the firm, brave spirit which the wife revealed. Still he would insist on a surety of payment, and William had given him a "promise to pay," due six years from date; to which Mary, also astonished and outraged by the old man's conduct, insisted on affixing her signature, that in case her husband should be *unable* to pay the debt, it might be held

against her! It was six years ago this very night that this thing happened, and now the money, promised was beside them on the table—they had saved it dollar by dollar, and heaven knows how it had been earned and saved; on the morrow they were to forward it to the old man, and proud and glad were they to assist in increasing his already boundless store of wealth.

But that old man was dead, and the letter was from the lawyer who had drawn the will. Enclosed was the note now due, with the blest intelligence that the creditor had in his death resigned the claim, and, in admiration for the wife of William Werne, had left to her a farm in another portion of the state, which was in itself a fortune—being extensive, unincumbered, and in a high state of cultivation!

Now was the earthly recompense indeed come to those long-striving ones, and for the dead old man, that deed of charity he wrought must indeed prove sufficient to cover "a multitude of sins."

To Willie and Mary Werne this was a reward so entirely unlooked for, un hoped for—it brought such joy to their hearts which had grown humble and patient under the chastisement of the Lord, that their astonishment would have given way to incredulity, had not the proof indisputable of the fact of their prosperity been given in the papers before them. And now this night, thoughts, some thoughts that for long they had not dared to cherish, stood up in a full and glorified light, and no more fervent prayers were heard in heaven, than those that went up from Mary's heart as she knelt beside her husband's chair, and while his arm embraced her, poured forth her soul in thankfulness and in glorious faith. Often-times had her voice gone up from that room in which they had lived since their marriage day, and always had his arm thus encircled her as her petitions were offered, but never till now had he joined so heartily in the petitions to which her soul and her faith had so often given the whole human efficacy.

Early in the spring-time they removed from their humble lodgings to their new home, which was situated in one of the richest agricultural districts of New York state. Had they ever aspired in thought to such a home, they had been guilty of a wild dream indeed—more, infinitely more than they had dared to hope was assured them. True, Willie was a cripple still, but now the *ability* to try that wondrous "water cure" was given, and not many months passed after they had entered into possession of their new estate, ere the husband and wife were on their way to Brattleboro'.

But if there was joy in this ability to seek for aid, there was somewhat of sorrow in it also, for it occasioned the first separation that the two

had known since their union. Apart from one another they could live only half a life, and more than can be written they missed each others presence, aid, and conversation while they were separated. However, the one year of absence would pass away swiftly, as after all had stern ten years of hardship and trial they had shared together; then Willie would be home again, crippled, helpless no longer, so all assured them.

And it was true. Twelve months passed, and at the end of June, (it was a year that very day since he parted with Mary) William alighted from the coach in which he had come up from —, while yet at a distance from home, that he might approach the cottage through the fields. It was in the evening, long after sunset, and the moon had risen when he moved through the beautiful walks, bordered with roses in full and glorious bloom that led to the cottage door. Oh, how full of gratitude was his heart as he stood, bound by sickness no longer, in his own halls—how hastily and joyfully he sought her for whose smile and whose kindness he had never, never looked in vain! With a noiseless step he entered the room where they had passed so many happy hours in those months before he went away. She was not there, but something that brought tears to his eyes flitted by him, a brilliant firefly—he could have kissed it for her sake, oh, to

him she had been more than that to which she once likened herself in her beautiful humility. The door of this apartment led to another, the pretty parlor, which, happy as young children with a play-house, they had decorated and furnished together, and—*she was there!*

There stood a couch in the centre of the room shrouded in white, and something lay therein that was *'motionless!* Faint and trembling with the conviction of all that had fallen upon him, Willie approached and bowed himself beside the bed. To him, in the moments that followed, it was as though an age had passed away since that sight first burst upon him, but still he knelt there, he dared not uncover that hidden face—he could not rise and go away.

Yet that he *did* look upon it at last, they who found him with the lifeless form of Mary folded in his arms, needed not to be told. When with trembling hands he laid aside the veil the moonlight fell on her face, and it seemed to him as though she smiled again, tenderly and sweetly as of old, upon him.

So had Mary Werne's mission on earth been fulfilled; so was her husband brought to say in deep humility and perfect truthfulness, in remembrance of all that was past, and all that was now come upon him, "it is the Lord. Let Him do as seemeth to Him good."

THE FOREST QUEEN.

BY AMANDA B. HARRIS.

CHAPTER. I.

At the time the Revolutionary War commenced, in an old mansion, a few miles below West Point, lived Colonel Robert Reed, a man of great wealth, and a distinguished friend of liberty. He had in early life been a companion of Washington, had shared with him the dangers and privations of a frontier war, and had been severely wounded while fighting by his side, on the day of Braddock's bloody defeat. After the close of the French war, Colonel Reed had engaged himself in business in his native city of New York, but soon after marrying a beautiful girl, the daughter of a southern planter, he was induced by her friends to take up his residence at Charleston, South Carolina. He had spent some fifteen years there, when, after the successive deaths of his wife and two fine children, he decided to return to the scenes of his early life. Leaving to the care of an agent his affairs at the south, and taking with him his little daughter, he came to the north, a few years before the war broke out, and purchased a fine estate on the banks of the Hudson, determined to spend there the remainder of his life.

Virginia Reed, then a handsome brunette of some ten or eleven years, inherited not only her mother's beauty, but the impetuous, passionate spirit born under that southern sky. Warm, ardent, and enthusiastic in all her feelings, quick to resent, yet ready to forgive, hers was a nature which more than any other needed the restraints of a mother's care. For a year or two previous to their removal to the north, Virginia had been placed under the government of a lady, who curbed her passionate spirit with the wisdom of one who would attempt to smother fire with cotton. But once away from that control, and free to follow her own wild will, she became restless and wayward, and as roving in inclination as a young Indian.

She had now no female companions, and becoming at once deeply interested in all her father's pursuits, she acquired his tastes, and gradually from that companionship her character took a masculine cast, and a strength unusual to her years, and if she was deficient in feminine accomplishments, she laid the ground work of a strong education, and better prepared herself for the events of her after life. Her new home was in the midst of the wild, romantic scenery in the

vicinity of the Hudson, and she took a deep and intense delight in wandering off for a whole summer day among the highlands. She accompanied her father in his hunting excursions, practised with a small rifle in shooting at a mark, and rowed for hours together upon the bosom of the broad, beautiful stream which flowed past their very door.

One of her first summers at the north, and a portion of nearly every subsequent year until the war broke out, she spent in the family of a paternal uncle, near Plattsburg, where, with her cousin, a lad a few years her senior, and as wild and spirited as herself, she pursued with untiring zeal her favorite amusements. In vain did her aunt, Mrs. Hammond, attempt to control her charming niece, and induce her to conform more to the tastes and habits of other females of her age. Virginia, somewhat wilful and wayward, and of late unaccustomed to submit, found a quiet in-door life extremely irksome, and, encouraged by her Cousin Harry, who was delighted with the spirit and beauty of his new playmate, she became his constant companion.

He constructed for her a birch bark canoe similar to his own, with the exception of being more gaily painted, and with her tried boat-races on the lake, Virginia being almost always sure to win. It was a scene of exciting interest to watch from some headland the frail bark canoes, with their merry occupants floating gracefully along, till suddenly Virginia, exerting all her strength, would shoot far ahead of her boyish companion, her eyes flashing back playful defiance, and her laugh ringing in mocking music far over the waters. Upon one occasion, in a freak of wild mirthfulness, and to the utter consternation of the members of her uncle's family, who were watching her from shore, she suddenly overset her boat, and just as they were rushing in the utmost anxiety to rescue her from what they believed would be a watery grave, she rose to the surface, and spreading her arms out upon the water, swam to the shore with the ease and gracefulness of a swan. How or where she learned this useful and pleasant art no one could tell, but a water-fowl could not be more at home in his favorite element than she.

In the use of the bow, she soon became more expert than Harry, learning at once with the readiness and aptitude which render girls so

superior in all easy acquirements to their equals in age of the other sex. Wishing her to become an accomplished archer, Harry fashioned for her a bow, lighter than his own, and furnished a quiver of arrows, the shaft of each being tipped with a feather from the plumage of some rare bird. Thus armed, she went forth with him almost daily, and soon became so skilful as to be able to send her arrow through the heart of a rose at an incredible distance; but on no occasion could she be induced to harm a living thing. Many a frisky squirrel and bright-winged bird owed its life to her tears and entreaties, never used in vain:

It having been at one time suggested that the young huntress should dress in conformity to her pursuits, her aunt furnished a fitting and most bewitching costume. This was a close jacket and full skirt of green cloth, the hem of the skirt being embroidered, and the jacket laced with crimson; a dainty little cap of green velvet was set coquettishly upon her head, and at the request of her cousin, she suspended from her neck a small bugle, scarcely larger than a child's plaything, but clear and mellow in its tones as her own rich voice. To add to the picturesqueness of her costume, she knotted a crimson scarf around her waist, and placed in her jaunty cap a crimson plume. Thus attired, she frequently spent with Harry a whole day in climbing the wildest peaks among the cliffs, the hills and forest ringing with their voices, and the sweet notes of Virginia's bugle.

These unfeminine but most delightful pursuits had the effect of heightening her beauty, and imparting to her health and strength. The free exercise in the open air aided in developing a most superb figure; gave a rich hue to her clear, brown complexion; and bestowed life, animation and grace on her manners. Dwelling so much among the beautiful scenery around the lake, she acquired, as none could have failed to have done, a passion for everything lovely and glorious in the world without, and often the poetry born of beauty would kindle in her fine eyes, and breathe in impassioned words from her lips.

As she grew older, her aunt remonstrated more than ever against such exposure of health, and against these pursuits, which now that she was no longer a child, seemed not only unfeminine, but improper. As well might she have attempted to call down an eagle from his flight, or reconcile an Indian to the restraints of civilized life! Virginia complied with her oft-repeated requests for three whole days; then complained that the house was too confined, that the in-door atmosphere oppressed her, said she must breathe the free air or die, and with a laugh and a bound was off. It would have been long before the

well-meaning aunt could have dissuaded her from her wild adventures, had not a little circumstance occurred, which convinced Virginia herself of the impropriety of going forth so much alone as she had been of late.

CHAPTER II.

ONE of the last summers which she spent at Mrs. Hammond's, some disturbances having occurred between the whites and a tribe of Indians, it was feared that the latter might by way of revenge annoy the inhabitants. It was presumed that they might be lurking about the woods in the vicinity of the lake, and Virginia was desired to limit her walks to the grounds around the residence of her aunt; but one fine afternoon, late in the summer, she stepped into her little boat, and without scarcely moving an oar floated quietly down the lake. She had frequently been there alone toward sunset, where the thick woods on the western bank flung deep shadows on the lake, while far out the water lay like a sheet of gold in the sunlight. She had glided leisurely along in the shadow, enjoying with a dreamy delight the quiet beauty of the hour, her spirit calmed and softened by the soothing influence; and her senses half lulled to slumber by the measured motion of the boat. About three miles below the residence of her uncle, was a little cave running far into the land, narrow and overhung with cliffs, and its banks shadowed by hemlocks, a still, lonely place, perfectly secluded and dark as twilight even at noonday. She was in the habit of mooring her boat at a landing-place, and clambering up the cliffs in search of beautiful wild-flowers and mosses, which grew in almost inaccessible places, and which were all the more valued from the danger in obtaining them.

Virginia was drifting slowly along, quite unconscious in her dreamy mood of her near approach to the cave, when the sharp crack of a rifle echoed through the woods, followed by a scream of agony. She started up and listened in astonishment, but no sound was to be heard except the prolonged echo, the scream of some wild-birds, and the drumming of a partridge frightened by the sudden report. While she still waited, the crackling of dry branches, as if stirred by some moving being reached her ear, and, glancing upward, she saw an Indian tottering as if wounded upon the very verge of the cliff; the next moment he fell headlong within a few feet of the water, and lay stunned by the fall. Virginia hesitated an instant, then fearlessly rowed to the landing-place, sprang on shore, bent over the savage, laved his brow with water, and attempted to staunch the blood flowing in a stream from his right arm, which lay powerless by his side.

While thus performing her deed of kindness, a young man in the uniform of a British officer came down a narrow path from the opposite direction, and likewise assisted in reviving the wounded Indian, who, now partially restored, was gazing in astonishment at the beautiful apparition before him. Before she had recovered from the surprise occasioned by the appearance of this second stranger, a rifle ball whizzed past her ear and lodged in a hemlock tree near by. This was followed by a wild whoop, and another Indian, more slender than the first, sprang down the cliff. The officer, with a single bound, placed himself between the savage and Virginia, who was cowering down in helpless agony. The wounded man with the energy of despair roused himself; and commenced in his own language an explanation of the appearance of the maiden.

It was a picturesque group, in keeping with the romance of the adventure. The savages with their copper complexions and strange garb, their black hair tossing in tangled elf-locks, as with many gestures they conversed in their own language; the young officer in his rich uniform leaning carelessly upon his musket; and the girl in her coquettish dress, with that little crimson plume swaying back and forth with every movement of her head.

Virginia did not then learn the cause of this occurrence, but she heard in broken English expressions of gratitude for her kindness. Nothing could exceed the delight with which the Indians regarded her; the younger of the two dancing around her with such wild expressions of pleasure that, frightened and anxious to leave her new friends, she prepared to depart. The officer unfastened her boat, and would have lifted her in had she not quickly evaded him; and then with his companion watched her with admiring eye, as skilfully and fearlessly she guided her little boat over the water. As she glanced back, the last time before rounding the headland, the officer gracefully waved his hand, and the Indians shouted their admiration.

On reaching home, Virginia, quite excited by the wonderful adventure, related it to her friends, who, very much alarmed on her account, forbade her leaving home again on so wild an excursion. In the course of a week a present of some game, and a curiously woven basket filled with fruit, was left at the house of Mrs. Hammond by some of the tribe to which the Indians belonged. Virginia was delighted with this token of their good feeling, and confident that she should renew the acquaintance of her dark-browed friends. Her love of adventure and daring spirit, which feared none but immediate danger, would have tempted her again to the cave; but the variety of company which she had met in a place before

considered particularly secluded, prevented her. It was soon ascertained that the Indian was shot for some provocation by a soldier from Plattsburg, but the affair was satisfactorily terminated without further bloodshed.

The next week after this occurred, Harry, who had been ill and confined to the house for some weeks, being able to accompany her, Virginia rowed him down to the cave, and left him lying on the grass at the foot of the cliff, while she climbed up to get for him a fine tuft of flowers which grew in an almost inaccessible place overhanging the water. Before she was half way up, hearing the rustling of leaves she looked around, and there, eyeing her with wondering gaze, sat a young Indian girl, her tiny person poised upon a rock, and her whole figure thrown forward in an attitude of grace. When she saw that she was observed, letting herself down by clinging to the shrubs, she soon stood on a shelving rock by the side of Virginia.

The two girls gazed at each other a few moments in admiring silence, then yielding to the irresistible merriment playing in their roguish eyes, laughed outright till the cliffs rang with the melody. Then the Indian came nearer her companion, pressed her lips to her hand, touched with her little brown palm the bright cheek of Virginia, passed it gently over the braids of her luxuriant hair, and curiously examined her dress. Virginia in turn, while submitting to this inspection, was admiring the full, symmetrical form of the dark maiden, very beautiful indeed in its rounded proportions. Her long, straight black hair was adorned with beads, and a head-dress of small shells; bracelets of the same clasped her arms, and the short tunic which she wore was embroidered, as were her moccasins, with porcupine quills and beads.

They attempted to converse, and Virginia found to her delight that her companion could make herself understood in English. Her name was Talula; she was the daughter of the sachem of the tribe, and the wounded man was her brother; she had come every afternoon for a week to the cave, to bring to her pale-faced sister a gift of wampum, and the feathers of some rare bird. After explaining this, and presenting her humble offering, Talula was about to depart; but Virginia, anxious that Harry should see the Forest Queen, tempted her down to the foot of the cliff to look at her bark canoe. Then she waved her hand; and with a low, bird-like whistle darted away, and was lost to view around a projecting rock.

This acquaintance with the Indians, romantic and delightful as it was to Virginia, was a source of constant uneasiness to Mrs. Hammond. Almost daily from that time the two girls met somewhere

in the vicinity; frequently that low, peculiar whistle was heard in the garden, at which signal Virginia would leave book, or work, or visitors to meet Talula. Presents were brought occasionally by some of the tribe, and their gratitude and admiration knew no bounds. They almost worshipped the spirited beauty. On one occasion they even insisted upon carrying her off to an encampment which they had a few miles west. Virginia promised to go, and having won a reluctant permission from Mrs. Hammond, she and Harry spent two days with the Indians. She went in her fanciful hunting-dress with her bow and arrows, and by her skill won smiles of admiration from the grave old men of the tribe. They placed her in a gay canoe, and as she guided it along the Saranac, from the shore they watched her with shouts of joy. The women brought flowers and placed them with childish delight in the braids of her rich, dark hair; they cased her feet in moccasins like those of Talula, and wound a necklace of delicate shells around her neck. When in her fanciful costume she stood beside Talula, scarce taller in height, and but a few shades lighter in complexion, she seemed rather a child of the forest than a maiden of a different race. The Indians clasped the hands of the two girls, danced in a circle around them, and christened Virginia the "Raven's Wing," her dark-browed sister the "Forest Queen."

Virginia did not lack for other admirers than the children of the forest, and among them was the young Englishman whose acquaintance she had made in a manner so romantic. He took an early opportunity to gain an introduction to the family of Mr. Hammond, and attempted to win the attention of his charming niece. He was a Captain Proctor, of the British army, at that time absent on a furlough from his post in Canada. Showy, brilliant and lively in conversation, with a dashing military air, which as well as his rich uniform, set off an unusually handsome form, he at once made quite an impression upon the fancy of Virginia. His general knowledge, and a tone of brilliant, witty conversation, in which she could encounter him with his own weapons, made him an agreeable companion, and happy to meet with a change from the usual company at Mr. Hammond's, she took the trouble, when not otherwise engaged, to make herself particularly fascinating to the officer. But she was then too girlish to annoy herself with love; and preferred her wild pastimes and the company of the "Forest Queen" to the most eloquent professions, or the most devoted admirer. When at the close of her visit, the gallant captain, who was perfectly enchanted with her, desired a parting token for remembrance, she gaily commended him to the last summer's butterflies, and left him.

CHAPTER III.

THE summer following that of Virginia's adventure with the Indians she spent at the south, and two years elapsed before she again visited Plattsburg. She found many changes. The tribe of Indians to which Talula belonged, the Oneidas, had moved further south, to the valley of the Mohawk, nearer her own home, where several of them had twice visited her since her return from the south. Her Cousin Harry was in England, and a new member had been received into her uncle's family in the person of Edward Warren, a young New Englander, somewhat connected with her aunt. He was just through a collegiate course, and now preparing himself for the profession he had chosen under the direction of Mr. Hammond, himself a clergyman of some eminence.

Silent, thoughtful and studious, young Warren seemed to the quick eye of Virginia to be strangely deficient in energy, spirit and determination, traits which predominated in her own character, and which, of all others, seemed essential to one of the other sex. Modest in conversation, and reserved in manners, he was exactly the reverse of her lively cousin and the dashing Proctor. She could but admire his finely cultivated intellect, his taste and refinement, but at the same time found herself seriously regretting that such gentleness—she almost thought weakness of character—should be united with abilities so superior. Warren, deeply engaged in his studies, was of too dreamy and reflective a turn to be fully appreciated by the brilliant girl—and she was not a little pleased at the arrival, in the course of the summer, of the devoted Proctor of her girlish admiration.

Each found the other much changed, Virginia from a wild, wayward girl to a charming, high-bred and accomplished woman—Proctor more showy, self-conceited and superficial than ever. The contrast between Warren and this officer was very apparent to Virginia; but somewhat piqued at the coolness and indifference of the former, and missing much her old friends, Harry and Talula, she permitted rather than encouraged the Englishman's attentions, and spent more time than she otherwise would in his society. A love of admiration, and a slight disposition for coquetry had some influence in this companionship.

At length being called to join his regiment, and prepare to take a new command in a detachment of troops just landed from Great Britain; previous to his departure, he offered his hand and fortune to Virginia. He was promptly rejected, but with such professions of esteem that he still hoped at no distant day to accomplish his object. At a previous time, perhaps, his English birth and connections would not have occurred to

her as serious objections, but dissatisfaction had already been expressed at the tyrannical measures of Great Britain; and Virginia's patriotism, now fully aroused, would alone have saved her from this rash and imprudent marriage. Next to her father she loved her country adoringly, with a love amounting to a passion. She combined the firmness of a Spartan matron with the lofty enthusiasm of a Joan d'Arc.

The winter immediately preceding the commencement of hostilities, Virginia continued in the family of her uncle. Since the disturbances at Boston, occasioned by the attempt to enforce the Stamp Act, war had been the constant theme of discussion at Plattsburg, which, situated so near the frontier, seemed destined to become the scene of active warfare. None were surprised at receiving intelligence in the April following of the engagement at Lexington. The very evening when this circumstance was first made known at Plattsburg, a party of young people, assembled at the residence of Mr. Hammond, were engaged in amusements when information was given of the rebellion. Every other subject was at once dismissed, and the colonial troubles becoming the theme, an animated conversation ensued. Virginia, ever ready to express her feelings in the cause of freedom, was now intensely excited. Her cheek kindled—her eyes flashed with the fire of an indignant spirit—her words were eloquent—impassioned—inspired. In the wild enthusiasm of the hour, she regretted to a timid female friend that her sex prevented her taking the command of a band of gallant men in behalf of her country.

"And a glorious leader you would be, one whom soldiers would follow to the death," was the involuntary exclamation of some one at her side.

She started in astonishment, and blushing deeply, met the eyes of the speaker, Edward Warren. More interested in him than she cared to acknowledge even to herself, she had a thousand times of late thought how nobly formed he seemed for a military leader. Just twenty years of age, with a tall, commanding figure, an open, manly countenance and graceful bearing, he would have won the love of those placed under his care, and made a fine appearance on the field. But the dark, dreamy eyes, the thoughtful reserve of his character, and above all that lack of fire, spirit and daring were rather adapted to the life of a student than a hero. She had wished most fervently that a portion of the lightning in her own soul could nerve and animate him, and now that wish seemed fulfilled.

From that hour a great change was apparent in young Warren. The gentleness and benevolence of his character gave place to a spirit terrible as that of an avenging angel. He found a congenial companion in Virginia, and together they talked

with enthusiasm of the future, and looked forward with eager hope to the day of their country's freedom—a day to be preceded by a dark night of fear and discouragements. That one theme was a subject of the deepest interest to both—the redress in their wrongs their greatest wish. Warren engaged a band of young men of nearly his own age, every one determined and fearless, and ready at any moment to place themselves under his command.

War was everywhere the constant theme of conversation. Women talked of it at the loom and spinning-wheel—old men by the fireside—and young men pledged themselves to the cause of freedom. Preparations were being made all along the frontier—every day some outbreak was expected. Affairs were in this situation when the story of Bunker Hill was told throughout the land. The struggle was actually commenced.

Young Warren's picked company was one of the foremost in action; joined to the corps of riflemen under Morgan, they shared in the dangers of that awful day before the walls of Quebec; fought by the side of the brave Montgomery, and closed around him when he fell. The disasters which befel the soldiers under Arnold, the privations and sufferings of that campaign in Canada are subjects of history. When at last, after a safe retreat the worn and wearied army landed at Crown Point, Edward Warren obtained leave for a week's absence to visit his friends at Plattsburg, and detail to Virginia Reed the events of the preceding months. Her welcome was such as a hero would love—her parting words, the country's watchword—"Liberty or Death!"

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY in the winter of 1778, Virginia's early playmate and cousin, Harry Hammond, arrived from England. His heart had been with his country, but prostrated by severe illness he had been unable to return. As soon as he could bear the voyage he took passage for America, and still too feeble to engage in active service, at the earnest request of Virginia took up his abode at the residence of his uncle. It chafed his proud spirit much to be compelled to lead an idle life, while so many of his years were serving their country, and winning distinction in the army. He waited impatiently his returning health and strength, meanwhile contributing not a little to the interest of the now monotonous life of Virginia.

Many of the immediate neighbors of Colonel Reed were violent tories; and one, a Mr. Van Zandt, was his avowed enemy, taking every occasion to injure him. Colonel Reed's activity in aiding his countrymen had gained him the

ill-will of the loyalists, but no man possessed more tried and devoted friends. His house was frequently a kind of hospital for the wounded, where they were attended with the utmost kindness and hospitality. Nothing could exceed the gentlemanly and considerate treatment manifested toward every soldier who came under his roof. It became also the meeting-place in all important counsels of the officers of the American army. Among those who frequently passed a day there was young Edward Warren, now stationed with his troop of mounted riflemen at a post in the Highlands.

Warren was not now, more than three years previous, the avowed lover of Virginia. He was deeply interested in her, how deeply he was not aware until the arrival of Harry Hammond. True, he had heard her speak of him a thousand times as a sister would of a brother, of their early intimacy, and he was aware that during his absence she was in the habit of writing to him frequently, and receiving from him most eloquent letters. It had never until now occurred to him that anything more tender than that cousinly affection existed between them; but the arrival of Hammond produced quite a change in his opinion.

Harry, though his inferior in strong mental culture, surpassed him in accomplishments, and had a winning, almost boyish cordiality of manners particularly captivating. It was impossible that he could have an enemy, and equally impossible that the generous, noble-minded Warren could harbor a feeling of resentment against any one, even if he believed him to be a rival. And after Harry's arrival he half declared his feelings to Virginia, but she somewhat evasively deferred the subject until a future time, and from that moment all confidence between them was at an end.

Deeply pained at the estrangement which he had the discernment to perceive had been occasioned by his arrival, Hammond once attempted to draw from his cousin an explanation of their mutual position, but with the utmost caution she evaded him. He afterward, in conversation with Warren, introduced the name of Virginia, hoping to win his confidence with regard to her, but that officer, with a haughtiness of manner unusual to him, changed the subject, and almost at the same instant mentioned his intention of soon going south with Morgan's corps of riflemen.

Affairs were in this position when the immediate neighborhood of Colonel Reed became the scene of hostilities, and events entirely unexpected followed each other in rapid succession. Toward the close of May, Sir Henry Clinton had sent a detachment from his army and taken the strong posts of Stony Point and Verplank, which the Americans had just fortified. The

day following that, on which the former place surrendered, Captain Proctor, who had received a wound in the engagement, was, by his own request, conveyed to the residence of Colonel Reed. By that gentleman and Virginia he was treated with the utmost courtesy and attention until able to join his company. Harry Hammond was particularly displeased at the presumption of the British officer, and still more so when his stay was prolonged after recovering from his wounds.

One evening while Harry and Virginia were anxiously conversing upon the most advisable means of regaining Stony Point, and together planning a map of the strong posts by which communication might be kept up between the different divisions of the American army, Capt. Proctor sent up a message, desiring a private interview with Virginia. Harry, at once divining the subject, desired her not to forget her devoted Warren, then absent at a post a few miles up the river.

"You are aware that I look with no favor upon any person connected with England."

"Possibly I may learn you to regard with favor, at least, one who claims to be of English birth," said Harry.

Virginia descended to her father's library, and there found Captain Proctor walking the room in some agitation. His object was in fact a renewal of his proposal for her hand. He was as courteously as before promptly rejected. Proctor, doubly mortified, and forgetting in his chagrin the respect due to a lady, demanded in the most ungentlemanly manner the reason.

"I will never wed a man who has taken up arms against my country in this unjust war."

"Not if by your marriage that war might be brought to a speedy termination?"

"What do you mean?" asked Virginia, "I do not understand your language."

"You are aware," said the Englishman, with some hesitation, "that I have a troop under my command, who only need my word to induce them to fight for one country as readily as another. You are aware too that several posts of importance to you are in our hands."

Virginia could listen with patience no longer and asked in a very distinct tone, "would you betray your own cause?"

"Men have done such things for a woman's love," was the evasive reply.

"True, and won thereby the everlasting contempt of the woman they professed to love."

The brow of the lover grew dark with anger. "I congratulate you, Miss Reed, upon your patriotism—if all the women of America were made of such mettle as you are, King, George might as soon attempt to bind the lightning a to subject this country."

"Thank God that my countrywomen are like me in preferring death to slavery."

The conference closed with these words. Virginia returned to her apartment, and alike evading the malicious questions of Harry, and banishing the unpleasant subject from her mind, was soon deeply interested in her plans concerning Stony Point.

"Wayne has been training a band of men for this especial enterprise," said Harry, "all of them men who are not afraid to die, who are ready to storm the fort at the point of the bayonet. Only a few were lacking for the enterprise, and Edward Warren and five of his gallant fellows pledged themselves to join the forlorn hope."

"What, to throw his life away?" exclaimed Virginia.

"You forget that he stood by the side of Montgomery before the walls of Quebec. He has seen danger before now."

"Ah, yes, you are right, Harry, I would have him do so. But it is dreadful to know that those you love——"

"Finish your sentence, pray do, Virginia, I thought you would tell me of this at some time," said Harry; then pitying his cousin who had so unguardedly spoken, he continued, "he has pledged himself to take the fort or die in the attempt; with a few such men we do not fear."

"You, Harry!"

"Yes, I have been too long inactive, cooped up in the house like a woman—I can endure it no longer. Nothing is wanting now but better information about the means of gaining access to the fort—if we could discover some better path."

"Then," said Virginia, after a moment's thoughtful silence, "I know of one who is familiar with every path about the fort. You recollect the 'Forest Queen.'"

"Ah, yes, the bright-eyed Indian girl who used to row with you on Lake Champlain."

"She spent her childhood among these hills, and her tribe has come back once more to an old encampment a few miles above here. I saw my dark-eyed sister only a week since; I will engage that she shall be your guide."

CHAPTER V.

On the night of the fourteenth, of July, five men met in the library of Colonel Reed.

Glance at them as they are grouped around the table, for two of them are leaders of the army, and the others as brave men as ever met the enemy. Foremost among them stands one, first in nobleness of soul—first throughout the land. His form, taller and more majestic than those around him, towers above them even as in

the might of mind he surpasses every man of his age. His mild, blue eye, clear, keen and calm; has a firmness and steadiness in its gaze, before which men quail in the day of battle—his high, broad brow wears the serenity of a man at all times self-collected and prepared for any trial—his whole countenance is composed and grave even to serenity.

By his side stands a fine-limbed man of thirty-four, unlike him in personal appearance and in character. Fierce, fiery and daring, his impetuous soul betrays itself in every flash of his dark, hazel eyes, in every muscle of his handsome countenance. His whole frame is quivering with excitement—his dark brows are knit together—his lips compressed. He is ready for any emergency, daring enough to engage in any enterprise, and deserves, as he has received, the appellation of "Mad Anthony."

At a little distance, watching eagerly the face of the commander, is the brave Fleury; by his side, in strange contrast to his bronzed face and hardy-looking form, stands young Warren, slender and delicate in figure, yet nobly proportioned, his countenance "like that of a Grecian warrior."

Presiding at the council is Robert Reed, his brow wrinkled—his hair slightly silvered—his whole manner calm, steadfast and thoughtful; his left hand supports his head as he listens to the words of Wayne; the right was shot away more than twenty years before, while defending his beloved companion, Washington.

The enterprise upon which these men were deliberating was a dangerous one, and one requiring men of iron nerves; the storming of Stony Point, a bold bluff projecting over the Hudson, washed by it on two sides, and rendered almost unapproachable on the land side by a broad morass, strongly fortified, and garrisoned by six hundred tried soldiers, under the command of one of the bravest officers of the British army. It was of the utmost importance to the Americans, as it was considered "a remote outpost of the stronger fortress of West Point," and was one of those posts by which communication was kept up between the eastern and southern divisions of the army. Since it had been in the possession of the British, the people on the opposite side of the river had been compelled to make a circuit of forty miles to communicate with those below. Washington had several times reconnoitered it from some of the neighboring cliffs, and "Mad Anthony," who was ready to head the enterprise, had examined every path leading to it from the land, and determined to attempt it on the following night. As yet no correct information could be gained of the garrison except by a deserter, and this convinced Washington that the place was almost impregnable, but Wayne

declared himself ready to lead his devoted men boldly up in broad daylight.

While these men were conversing together, the door of the library opened, and Harry Hammond entered, accompanied by Virginia Reed and the "Forest Queen." Briefly stating that the Indian girl knew of a path leading to the very foot of the cliff, and would guide any one of their number there that night, he respectfully awaited the decision.

Washington hesitated at the romantic proposition; Wayne professed himself ready to follow her, and the cautious Fleury asked who would insure the fidelity of the Indian girl.

"I will answer for her with my life," said Virginia, modestly, but firmly.

Talula had stood in silence during the conversation, with hands meekly crossed upon her bosom, and eyes downcast, but as she comprehended the words of the speaker, a rich crimson suffused the clear brown of her complexion, and with lips half-parted she stepped eagerly forward, but meeting the eyes of so many strangers shrunk back abashed to the side of Virginia.

"Talula is true, and a friend to the Americans, and will conduct you safely to Stony Point, if you will trust to her guidance."

"I will follow her," said Wayne.

Warren and Hammond immediately proposed accompanying them. As Talula heard the last mention his intention of going, her eyes lighted up with such pleasure that Virginia glanced in astonishment from one to the other.

As they left the library, Harry in passing Virginia observed to her in a low voice, but suffi-

ciently loud to be heard by his companions, "I hope you will not retire until after my return—I wish to have a few moments conversation with you."

Warren, aware of the peril attending the enterprise, had come to the residence of Colonel Reed, with the intention of having an interview with Virginia; but, hearing this remark, he took a cold leave of her, presuming that he should not again see her. In case he did not fall on the ensuing night, he had decided to join the division of the army at the south.

Talula, with the cautious step of an Indian, led the way along a narrow path by the river, and continuing for three miles, at length entered a thicket of alders, which, judging from their thick branches tangled and intertwined, had not been passed by man or beast for years. The young men tore them apart, and carefully threading the intricate way, they found themselves on the borders of a morass, beyond which was an abbatis of hewed trees and other obstacles to prevent their approach. Talula preceded them through the damp and muddy reeds, and all soon stood at the very foot of the dark rock looming up against the starry sky like some old castle. Along the ramparts they saw the forms of the sentinels, and heard the call "all's well" repeated as they passed. Wayne silently gazed at the fort towering above them, and thought of the awful carnage that the stars would look down upon on the night to come—of the dreadful loss of life that must take place before the English banner could be torn from the walls.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

THE GUARDIAN SPIRIT.

BY ELEONORA L. HERVEY.

TAKING its way through green meadows thickly studded over with the blossoms of June, rippled a narrow stream. On its banks grew the tall reed-mace intermingled with flowers of the yellow iris; while, undisturbed by the current which flowed so peacefully down toward the valley, the white chalices of the water-lily, couched upon their broad green cradle of leaves, opened to the tender light of day, heedless whither or on what errand the waters took their way so steadily and noiselessly along between their green banks.

If the lilies cared not to mark how the waters flowed, there was one—a human flower, stainless yet as themselves, who did so; and marked them with a quickened spirit, and with a heart that throbbed to its own questioning.

This was a young girl whose years could not have numbered more than seventeen, yet upon whose cheek the rose already paled. Sickness of soul—weariness—falling hope—self-distrust—were all written visibly in the lines of that young face. As she gazed down upon the clear waters, though she said not a word, her looks expressed plainly enough:—"If ever I should be driven to cast myself yonder down among the small wavelets—whither, to what shore, would my soul be borne?"

That she had offended against some great law by even that brief passing thought, the girl seemed to feel. This was evident from the sudden lifting of her eyes upward toward—but not to the stars. Hers was a look which seemed striving to search—to pierce *beyond* them.

She was roused out of her reverie by the sound of a heavy step passing along the stile-way where the pasture land verged off in the direction of some thick woods.

The girl looked round. A young man's face met hers—and in a moment the shadow passed from her.

As he took her by the hand, and led her under the beech boughs the ripple of the water grew louder and louder. As it bubbled over the pebbles that shone bright far down in its clear bed—the sound it made was like the sound of sobbing. Perhaps tears were mingling with the waters. Far, far away, high up among some clefts of rock where the river took its rise—a winged creature stood, covering its face with pale hands through whose veins mortal blood seemed never to have flowed.

From between the veiled lips—colorless as the hands through which their utterance spoke disturbed and broken as the rippling sounds in the waters' bed—came the cry,

"Father! teach, oh! teach me how to save her?—I am but a reed in thy hand—make me as a strong staff to guide her erring feet!"

"Whither shall I turn? Invisible to human sight, I must seek a habitation in the heart of man. When shall I find a temple meet for me?"

The scene is changed.

A young man sits alone. His face is not the same face as that which was seen looking into the eyes of the girl where the meadow sunlight was lost in the forest glade. This man is the brother of the maid. His head is bowed under the weight of her present folly—under the dread of her future shame. He does not see the spirit that passes before his very face. He feels only a sudden ray of sunshine; and, as the beam flashes upon him, closes his eyes before its brightness. As he does so, the guardian watcher passes into his soul.

In vain!

The spirit had chosen her habitation ill: the lodging was not pure enough for the dweller.

A whole year had run its round; and, as the steps of time fulfilled their circle, the same human steps came round to the same point of space again.

But what a change was here! The girl, although but a single year was added to her life, looked old and haggard. Her eyes were wild. A frantic gesture of irrepressible love, as she drew still closer and closer to her breast the child she sheltered there, alone evidenced the lingering of human affection amidst the almost utter absence of human reason. The mind was a wreck: the heart had yet one plank to which it might cling. The seas had not flowed over *all*.

Again, as of old, she bends over the stream. She stands irresolute for a moment—it is but for a moment; in the next, the child is withdrawn cautiously from her bosom—as she is careful not to wake it!—and laid it softly on the turf at her feet.

She disrobes:—what is she about to do? Is she alone, and unmarked? She looks round once more to be quite sure. All is well: she is alone.

It was moonlight now. A rustle, as of wings, filled the hushed air; and a soft flash, passing from among the quivering leaves of an aspen near, stole over the face of the child.

This time, had the Guardian Spirit chosen wisely? Here was an abiding-place pure enough for the purest!

The mother's foot was already plashing among the slimy reed-roots on the edge of the cold waters, when—her heart yearning to the babe—she turned her wan, gaunt face to take a last long look at the sinless thing to which it clove, even in its agony.

How forlorn it looked there! Should she take it with her down to the river's hard bed?

No.

Could she leave it there, where it lay, and the waters so close?

Not so, either.

She turned, and took it lightly in her arms—keeping her eyes fixed another way, lest her purpose should be shaken—and laid it down further off, in the middle of the path, where it would be found by some strange wayfarer on the morrow.

That done—oh, labor of mistaken love!—she

would have risen and hurried back to the river's brink, for she felt her purpose slackening. Some dawn of reason was returning. Fitful suggestions of better things visited her, flashing here and there through her clouded brain, like dancing lights upon a marsh. She could not accomplish it! Something held her back with a strange force. Two little arms—far too slight to have held together the filaments of a broken rose-stem—were strong enough *here* for the work they had to do.

As the child, weeping, clasped her neck, the heart of the mother softened. The truth broke upon her at last. It was a weak thing to die: a strong thing to live on, and battle with hunger and the world's scoff—poverty and shame—for the sake of the guiltless being that held her there in its strong coil of love!

As she passed homeward—the babe locked in her bosom—a chastened woman—homeward to a dull, ill-lighted, low-roofed garret in the great city's heart, her eye caught a soft flickering among the leaf-shadows on her way, where the moon shone most brightly. It was the passing of the Guardian Spirit. Her work was done.

THE MINISTER'S DEATH-BED; OR, A REMINISCENCE OF A PHYSICIAN.

BY O. C. GIBBS, M. D.

PERHAPS no vocation in life brings a man into so near proximity with his fellow man as that of a physician. In the discharge of his various duties, an opportunity presents itself for reading the thoughts, the feelings, and emotions of the souls of those, into the bosoms of whose families he is admitted as a monitor in health, and a ministering angel in periods of suffering and disease.

On a beautiful May morning, in the year 184—, it was my fortune to be summoned to the bedside of the Rev. Mr. —; a stranger to the community in which he then chanced to be stopping.

I found my patient laboring under a severe attack of enteritis. The wiry and intermitting pulse and ghastly features told too well that death had laid siege to the citadel of life—had entered within the sacred inclosure and seized upon his victim with a grasp that could not be shaken off; that his soul would, probably, soon quit its mortal tenement to join the majestic throng beyond the grave.

My prescription made and directions given, I was about to leave my unfortunate patient, with a promise to return at four in the afternoon, when he interrupted me by saying, "you will please give me your opinion, doctor, relative to the prospects of my recovery. Fear not to unnerve me by a disclosure of your worst fears. If recovery is possible, it is well; if death is inevitable, I am far from unhappy. Such intelligence would be received with composure, if not almost hailed with delight."

"Your recovery," said I, "is indeed doubtful; the results, however, of medication, rest upon higher than human power. But why detest life? Has time's pathway been thus rugged and steep, or dark and flowerless, that you are willing to quit claim upon the pleasing vicissitudes of earth, and penetrate the veil that overhangs the sombre of the tomb?"

With eyes moist with the dews from a sensitive soul, and a countenance which bespoke the remembrance of long past agony, he replied, "when you call at four, if life is mine, and strength permit, I will give you a chapter in my history, which will answer your inquiry, and relieve what curiosity a stranger may have awakened."

At the appointed hour, I returned and found that disease had been faithfully serving his master, death, into whose arms the victim was rapidly sinking.

"You have come in time," said he, "to witness my death; you may think it strange, but indeed I long for the hour. I promised," he continued, "to tell you why earth has no joys for me, and this will be its first and last recital.

"The city of Philadelphia is the place of my nativity. I was the only son of a merchant, in comfortable circumstances; was early sent to school, and continued at some institution of learning until the spring of 1832, when I bade farewell to college halls, with the honors of Master of Arts and Doctor of Medicine.

"I had scarce numbered eighteen summers, when a fortuitous circumstance brought me into social intimacy with one of the angels of earth. I need not tell you how that intimacy, on my part, ripened into love, nor how that love was reciprocated, with all the depth, and fullness, and fervency of a refined and sensitive woman's nature. I need not tell you of the new hopes that inspired my bosom, of the new energies awakened, or of the renewed vigor with which I prosecuted my studious task. I need not tell you of the many hours that I was then privileged to enjoy, nor of my mistake in supposing this world to be one wide scene of universal sunlight and joyousness; nor need I tell you of the thousand pictures of connubial happiness and future domestic felicity which fancy conjured up; forgetting that time was silently working its changes, and that death was seeking victims alike regardless of human weal or woe. These are pictures that your own fancy must draw: suffice it to say, that I was married soon after my return from college, to her to whom my soul had been for years bound by the strongest ties of affection.

"I entered immediately upon the duties of my vocation, and, ere the summer was spent, cholera hung a veil of gloom over the land, and its sinoom breath carried death, desolation, and woe to many a household hearth. All ages, and ranks, and conditions were alike subject to the destroying pestilence; its withering blight and mildew touch painted the hue of death upon many a rosy cheek, dimmed many a sparkling

eye, and robbed many a hale and lovely form in the pale and ghastly habiliments of the tomb. In its onward march of death and devastation it did not pass my small, but sacred circle of relationship entirely by. I had prayed that my home might not be visited by such an unwelcome guest; that my household idols might remain unbroken. But my prayer proved futile. My father sank with scarce a moment's warning, and on the following day my mother was a corpse. Death laughed at the shivered and almost powerless weapons employed by the practical votaries of our art, and continued effectually dealing its blows, which none of us had the power to withstand.

"I need not describe to you the pangs, that accompanied the poison-barbed arrow of affliction, that pierced my heart when my parents passed to their final resting-place. But, after that event, my affections were fixed, if possible, with greater concentration upon her who was alone left to comfort me in my grief. Nor need I tell you of the agonizing fear that harassed my bosom, lest the plague should invade my own fireside—lest the wide-spreading pestilence should fix its fatal kiss upon the rosy cheek, and seal the melancholy doom of her that formed the only connecting link that bound me to earth: these are mere outlines of a picture which your imagination can fill up.

"The last sad and mournful rites which I was unexpectedly called upon to discharge toward the lifeless remains of my parents were scarce performed, or the tears of mourning dried, ere I felt the cold fingers of the devastating plague feeling round my own heart for the slender threads of life; the death-worm was gnawing at the very citadel of my existence; cold drops of sweat bedewed my ghastly features, and an impenetrable mist closed tight around and enveloped me in its murky folds. I felt the icy grasp of death approach the waning fountain of life, and knew my hour was come, but cared not, save for her who bent like a ministering spirit over me, wiping the cold dews of death from my paling brow, and momentarily breaking the misty cloud that surrounded my vision by a kiss that sent a thrill of joy to the very depths of my soul, even in this hour of agony. Never till then did I know the depths of woman's love, or the power and influence of sweet words of endearment. The thoughts of the pent-up emotions that were bursting her sensitive heart; the utter loneliness, and woe, and grief that would soon be hers; the fountain of happiness that would soon be congealed at its very source; and the dews of affection that would be converted into a hoar-frost of despair around her soul, came rushing, like a wild tornado of agony, over

my mind, and thought and memory ceased to perform their office.

"But my time was not yet come. I awoke at length to consciousness and life, robed in the pale habiliments of the grave, to which I was soon to have been consigned. I felt like a mass of insensate matter—like a lump of ice suddenly endowed with the power of thought. A feeble fluttering of the heart at length evinced that the fountain of life was awakening from its fridity, and soon the crimson current broke the fetters of congelation, and went slowly and feebly coursing through every vein. The haze that had beclouded my vision was gone; and my eyes opened upon a spectacle which God grant you may never see nor I again. My wife—oh! that look of despair is imaged upon my memory never to be effaced—was kneeling by my side, and the very fountains of her soul were welling up in broken accents of inconsolable agony to the ears of pitying heaven. The object upon which her earthly affections rested, and around which they were entwined, she supposed, had passed away: the sweet images of love and happiness she cherished were stricken from her heart, and she mourned in bitter anguish over her broken idols; but bowed in sad submission to the decrees of heaven, and, prayed with clasped hands and quick gaspings, as though body and soul were parting. Wild sobs came up from her bleeding heart, while her eyes were baptised in burning tears.

"Could I then have looked down the dim vista of futurity and marked the sorrows gathering in my path; the wreck of the heart's idols; the crushing of every earthly hope; the blighting of that bosom whose every throb beat with a deeper, truer, stronger, holier love; the lonely footsteps winding downward through a life of woe and weariness, to a death amid strangers in a strange land, my spirit would never have re-animated this stiffened frame; but would have burst its fetters and plumed its wings for heaven.

"The incidents of my slow and tedious recovery I need not relate. Suffice it to say, that a loving, gentle, confiding being, in whose pure heart my happiness was placed, was ever present to anticipate and minister to my wants, and beguile tedious hours of mourning and pain with the sweet antidotes of sympathy and holy affection.

"The vain and heartless may look upon the smiling coquetry of the devotee of fashion as the highest of female perfection. Others may extol the witchery of woman's loveliness, as, arrayed in gossamer attire, she moves sylph-like through the mazes of the dance. But it is not here that her highest charms are made known, or her noblest mission revealed. It is in cooling the parched tongue, calming the aching brow, and

pouring the balm of consolation into the sorrow-stricken heart, that woman seems most allied to angels, and consequently inspires the deepest emotions of love and reverence.

"The cloud of gloom which had hung like an incubus over the land, at length passed away; but not till many a thunderbolt had reached its victim, and left its marks in scathed trunks of widowhood and seared leaves of orphan infancy. Tears of mourning and grief, in a measure, gave way to the rejoicings of deliverance; and prayers of thankfulness went up from many a burthened heart. Autumn brought its rich harvests as though nothing had happened; winter came and went with its accustomed rigor; spring blossomed with its wonted loveliness, and many a soul seemed budding with affection and ripening with its golden harvest of happiness. But ere long the clarion notes of alarm were sounded, which boomed over hill and valley, over lake and river, giving to the cheek of health and joyousness all the pallor and sadness of fear. The terrific messenger of death had retired but to grind its weapons and whet its vulture fangs, and now returned with ghastlier mien, and bolder, firmer tread.

"Standing aloof from the scene of conflict, and marking the gradual advance of the deadly enemy, unarrested by human efforts, and disregarding the feeble barriers which were raised against it, one might have supposed that the messenger of an offended God had poured into the air the viol of wrath and chastisement for human error. Having drunk deep of the cup of sorrow at his last annual visitation, I had hoped the plague would spend its rage elsewhere; but imagine if you can my horror, when, on returning from a successful conflict with the hydra monster

at the residence of a friend, I found, in retaliation, he had made an onslaught in my own household. The idol of my home had received, deep in her bosom, far beyond the power of extraction, the arrow of death.

"If you have seen the dearest and last loved one of earth sicken; if you have beheld her frame racked with tortures—have seen her cheek put on the hue of death, and her loved eyes grow dim, without the power to succor in this hour of distress; if you have heard the trembling voice breathe its last farewell, its dying prayer to heaven for you when she were gone; if you have felt the last impassioned kiss from the cold and quivering lips of the dearest of earth; if you have looked upon the glassy fixedness of the eye foreshadowing death—have watched the last expiring agonies, and felt your utter loneliness and grief, you may imagine my feelings when I beheld that sweet smile upon her lovely face, and heard her command my soul to heaven as her own pure spirit quitted its tenement here, and winged its way far beyond the confines of time and through the ebon gates of Paradise.

"The stroke came home to my feelings like a thunderbolt, dried up the fast flowing fountain of my tears, and went scathing down to the very depths of my over-burthened and breaking heart. The remembrance of pleasures forever past was but a light to reveal my present loneliness; with no friend with whom to sympathize and love, I wandered in loneliness among strangers, striving to prepare my soul and the souls of others to meet the loved in heaven."

Here the dying man finished his recital, and ere the morrow's dawn awoke in loveliness he slept in death; his soul had sped to revive its old affections in the Paradise of God.

THE SACRIFICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM."

CENTINUED FROM PAGE 53.

VI.

AND now Anne addressed herself to her self-imposed task. The management and rule of a large family is difficult, even for a mother, then how much more for a young, inexperienced girl!

But a few weeks before, and Anne had been the playmate of her younger brothers and sisters; now she was to become their monitor. She felt the delicate ground on which she stood. To cease to be the sister would be to lose their affection, yet not to act, in a measure, as a parent would dissolve all discipline. She saw she would have to check and control, where formerly she had yielded. She knew she would frequently be considered harsh, and perhaps sometimes secretly compared unfavorably with the lost mother. But she determined to act as she thought was right, and to leave the rest to God.

It happened as Anne had foreboded. The children seemed to think that a larger license than formerly was now their right, and when Anne interposed her authority they pouted, sometimes even resisted, and once or twice appealed to her father. But the stern tone in which he rebuked them, discountenanced any such resort for the future, and they contented themselves with a sullen obedience to her commands.

Understand us, it was not always so. Anne wished to rule by love, and generally succeeded. But there are things necessary for children to do, sometimes, of which they cannot perceive the reason, and which consequently they resist, if in a mischievous or wilful mood. In such cases obedience must be enforced, or discipline is lost; and with discipline, the character, often the destiny of both for this world and for the world to come.

Anne knew this. Young as she was, she had seen an indulged daughter grow up to be a thorn in a mother's happiness, a spoiled son become the disgrace of his family.

The youngest sister of Anne was a child of but four years old, a beautiful little girl, whose flaxen curls, laughing blue eyes, and winning manner won the heart of every one. Her beauty, which made her such a favorite, threatened, however, to render her selfish: this was the one great evil tendency of her character; and this Anne felt it her duty to endeavor to check.

One day little Ellen had a plate of strawberries, and was eating the delicious fruit, when her brother, a lad of six years, came in and asked for some.

The petted little princess fancied she had just enough for herself and poutingly refused. The strawberries were the first of the season, and she had no idea of sharing them. But it was for their very scarcity that her brother desired a portion.

"You might give me one or two, Ellen," he said, coaxingly, coming close up to her and looking wistfully at the plate.

She stopped eating, threw her arms around the saucer, and began to whine.

"Go 'way, you bad boy," she said, between her cries. "Ellen wants all the strawberries herself—you shan't have none—so you shan't."

"Ah! just a taste?" pleaded the boy, drawing nearer.

But at this Ellen set up a shriek, which brought Anne into the room, frightened, for she thought the child was hurt.

When she heard the cause of the uproar, she reproved Ellen for her selfishness, and told her to divide her strawberries with her brother. But the little girl pouted and refused, whereupon Anne took the plate and gave a portion of the fruit to the boy.

At this the petted beauty screamed outright again, pushed the plate angrily from her, threw herself on the floor, and began violently kicking. Anne endeavored to touch her heart by kind words, but the little girl was now in a passion of selfish rage, and she shrieked the louder at Anne's expostulations. At last punishment became necessary, but the rebel would not yield, and it was only when physically exhausted that she gave in. But her sobs, even then, were terrible, for a nervous paroxysm had succeeded, the consequence of the protracted struggle, and the child really appeared, for a time, about to die. The tears rained from Anne's eyes, as sob after sob, seeming to rend the little frame of Ellen, broke on her ears. But she had only done her duty. "How else could I have acted?" she said.

Herself unnerved by the protracted struggle, she was less able than usual to reconcile herself to her lot. That night, therefore, when she

retired to her pillow, and reflected there that she had sacrificed her best affections for these children, I am afraid that, for a few moments, she almost regretted her decision. She thought of Frederick, and his anger at her: and her heart melting, she forgave his injustice.

Her distress had been increased by a few words from her father, who, on coming home and finding the condition of his little favorite Ellen, had unwisely censured Anne for undue harshness. He meant to do right, but he it was who spoiled the child with petting her: and Anne felt his double injustice. She now had no one to take her side. She thought, with tears, that if she had not cast Frederick off, she would have had at least one friend! And she fell asleep, sobbing almost as wildly as her sister.

VII.

THE following morning, Anne, to whose spirits a night of slumber had restored the tone, was alarmed by the nurse saying,

"I don't think little Ellen is well. She seems to have a fever."

Anne immediately repaired to the nursery, where, at a glance, she saw that the nurse was correct in her fears. The child's cheek was flushed, her eyes looked heavy, and the skin of her little hand was burning hot.

"She moaned in her sleep all night," said the nurse.

"We will wait until afternoon, when, if she is no better, we will send for the physician," said Anne. "Meantime I will give her some slight medicine myself."

By afternoon, however, the little girl was evidently worse. She refused to play, but sat in Anne's lap, her head resting against her elder sister's bosom; and she could, with difficulty, be roused from the stupor into which she continually fell.

"I fear she is going to be very sick, nurse," said Anne, as the child lay thus senseless in her arms.

"Poor dear!" replied the nurse.

When Mr. Malcolm came home, at night, and heard how ill Ellen was, he showed much alarm. He took the little girl, and tried to rouse her by showing her his watch, which heretofore had always highly gratified her; but now she merely looked at it once, smiled a faint smile, and then laid her head wearily down.

Anne, who was already torn by anxiety for her sister, had her troubles increased by happening to overhear a conversation about the child, between her father and the nurse.

"Dear little angel," said the nurse, "I expected this. I knew when Miss Anne punished her last night, and she nearly broke her heart

with sobs, that she would be sick in consequence. I only hope she may get over it."

The nurse was prejudiced and weak toward the child; besides she was jealous that Anne, instead of herself, had been left in charge of the household.

"Don't talk of such a terrible thing as the death of Ellen," said Mr. Malcolm, fondly pushing the hair back from the forehead of the child, and gazing lovingly upon her face. "Anne, I know, was too harsh. This little dear is weak in health, and ought to be indulged."

Anne's hand was on the lock of the door when the nurse began to speak. Her limbs, weakened by the speaker's words, refused to carry her away, and so she heard also her father's censure. She burst into tears, staggered from the door, and crept to her own room.

"Oh! Father in heaven," she cried, falling on her knees, "thou knowest that I have striven to do aright. Make me conscious of my error, if these censures are just, and forgive me. And if I have done no wrong, if these words of blame are cruel, give me strength to bear them, and to do my duty through all. But save this dear child's life—" here sobs choked her utterance—"spare my sister, and do not break my father's heart entirely."

To hear her thus pray, seeking mercy for the parent who had been so unjust to her, oh! it was beautiful.

She descended to the nursery with a calmer spirit. Mr. Malcolm still held the little sufferer, nor would he part with her. In both his demeanor and that of the nurse, Anne saw a smothered indignation against her as the cause of the child's illness; and she was treated consequently as one unworthy to minister to the invalid's comfort.

She bore it all meekly; for she knew she had only done her duty. To be misjudged thus was, she felt, a part of her sacrifice.

VIII.

THE child grew worse.

The physician had pronounced the illness a disease of the brain.

All that night, all the next day, and all the ensuing night the little sufferer continued to show more fatal symptoms.

She woke frequently with a sharp cry, looked around, and cried for her mother. Anne would tenderly lift her up, for the dear girl had insisted on taking the child to her own spacious room, and endeavor to soothe her by carrying, but Ellen could not be thus quieted.

"I want my mamma," she cried. "Mamma, mamma!"

And then she would stretch out her little

arms, pronouncing "mamma" so piteously that it would have been a heart of rock not to have melted to tears. Anne's own tears flowed plentifully.

The next day the delirium of the sufferer assumed another aspect. She lay generally in a stupor, from which occasionally she started with that same piercing cry, but now it was Anne for whom she asked. But when Anne came forward, and extended her arms to take her, the child would turn away, unsatisfied.

"Take me to Anne," she would say. "I want Anne. Anne, Anne!"

"I am Anne," her weeping sister would reply. "Don't you know me? Come, Ella." And she would again stretch out her arms.

The child would, perhaps, look at her, but vacantly, and turning away would resume her touching plaint.

"I want Anne. I want Anne. Take me to Anne."

This suffering, which was from a delirious imagination, and which could not, therefore, be alleviated, smote the hearts of the spectators with inexpressible pain. Sometimes the nurse would come forward and call herself Anne, and, once or twice, the child went to her, as if deceived; but soon she would shriek out again, her plaintive cry would be resumed, and her little arms would be outstretched as her dim eyes traversed the room in all directions.

"Take me to Anne. I want sister Anne. Anne, Anne, Anne," she would exclaim.

Oh! it was terrible to hear her. The hearts of all were agonized, but none like Anne's. I have beheld many things to wring tears from the eyes, but never anything like this strange delusion of that suffering child.

The third day little Ellen was still worse. She now lay, all the time, in a state of stupor, her head going from side to side continually.

The neighbors would come in, look a minute at the invalid, and shake their heads ominously. One or two, who had lost children by this terrible disease, shed tears, the terrible spectacle reminded them so of the sufferings of their own lost babes.

"Poor little dear," said one, scarcely able to speak for emotion, "you'll soon be an angel in heaven. When they turn their head from side to side that way, Miss Anne, it is all over."

That night, when the physician came, Anne, controlling her great grief, addressed him calmly, and begged to know the real condition of the child.

"I can't give you much hope," said the venerable practitioner, "but I will not bid you entirely despair. It is impossible to tell whether the brain is chronically diseased, or not, for the

symptoms throughout are nearly the same. If the former, the child will die, and it will be better for it, too," he added, kindly, "for even if it could recover its physical health, it would be an idiot for life. If the latter, which God grant, your little sister may recover."

"May recover, you say. Then even that is doubtful?"

"Quite."

"Have you ever known one so ill as Ellen to get well?"

The physician mused, looked pityingly on the speaker, and answered,

"But one."

Anne clasped her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven. Notwithstanding her efforts at composure, the big tears streamed down her cheek. The heart of the grey-haired practitioner was inexpressibly affected.

"Courage, my daughter," he said, laying his hand on her young head, as if thus silently invoking a blessing on her. "God is merciful, and while there is life there is hope."

But she still wept on. She was thinking that, if the child died, the entire family would regard her as its murderer, and though she had a sweet consciousness of innocence, yet that those she loved should think her in fault, was more than she could bear. The physician, who knew and esteemed her at her true worth, as her deceased mother had, divined her feelings, for he was in the family secrets; and said,

"Do not censure yourself, Anne, my child, for you have done right, not wrong, and whatever may be the issue, you will have nothing for which to reproach yourself. You have been a second mother to this little sufferer, not only since her illness, but before, and God will reward you. Even now your sainted parent looks down from heaven on you, smiling approvingly."

"Oh! I wish I could think so," ejaculated Anne.

"You *will* think so. The Almighty will not suffer you to go un comforted," said the old man, solemnly, and as if imbued with the spirit of prophecy. "And as for the child, whether it lives or dies, all will be for the best."

He blessed her and went his way. And Anne, cheered by his words, and fired with a portion of his faith, half believed that, around his departing figure, clung a halo of celestial light. For, in truth, the angels are all around us, not indeed in shining wings, but in the guise of the good and kind.

That night when Anne slept, for a few hours, while the nurse relieved her at the sick child's couch, she dreamed that she saw the heavens opened, and her mother, at the head of a band of radiant beings, advancing toward her. A harp

was in that dear one's hands; and white garments, from which emanated a dazzling light, flowed about her: she came to the very edge of the celestial battlements, and smiling sweetly, said,

"Be of good cheer, daughter; for you have acted rightly through all; and, for your sake, the child's life shall be spared."

I X.

THE dream was realized. Little Ellen recovered.

Oh! what bliss was in the house when it was seen that the sufferer was getting better.

From the night of her dream Anne persevered in declaring that the child would not die. When others desponded, she was cheerful. The nurse, her father, her other sister, and even some of the neighbors who had assisted them in watching, all gave out, worn down physically and mentally by ten days of incessant anxiety, but Anne, as if sustained by some unseen power, endured all, and continued vigorous and hopeful to the last.

"She is a miracle," said Mr. Malcolm, to the physician, one day. "She sustains all our hopes, besides nursing Ellen day and night."

"She is an angel," was the reply.

When the little sufferer first opened its eyes, when she took notice of her father's watch-seals, and when she spoke faint words and asked for food, at all of these glad events, though days apart, what exultation was there in that family! The different members looked at each other lovingly, through happy tears; and all blessed Anne.

Yes! no one thought any more of her supposed cruelty to the child; but each felt that Anne had been right, and the rest wrong.

If it is a hard thing sometimes to walk in the path of duty at first, it is at last always a blessing and a triumph. So Anne recognized it now. And in her transcendent joy, she almost forgot her sacrifice.

Oh! how much nobler, how infinitely more wise to go forward in the way where duty calls, meeting the dust and turmoil of life even, if such be our destiny, than to sit by the road-side and shed vain tears over misfortunes that are inevitable, over disappointments that honor and religion alike command us to bear heroically.

X.

THE life of Anne was a series of similar trials. With so many young children in the family, it was impossible for her to leave them even for a week, and, therefore, relaxation was unknown to her. She saw her female friends of her own age visiting the city, for a month or even more, each winter; she heard their descriptions

of the concerts, operas, balls, parties, and other entertainments there; but she could only sigh, and then blame herself for even sighing. Anne was not without the tastes of her age. By temperament, too, she was gay and sociable; but she knew it was her duty to remain, and she bravely checked every repining.

This total immuring from society would not have been so hard to one older in years, to one who had lost the taste for company; but it seemed cruel that one fitted like Anne especially to shine in society, and to enjoy it with a zest, should be shut out from it entirely. But there she remained, month after month, and year after year, in that solitary country-house, as much tied down to the duties of a household as if she had been married for twenty years.

Sometimes, when she thought of Frederick she could not restrain the sigh, that at other times she checked. For, though they had parted in anger, she still secretly trusted they would meet again, when all would be forgiven and forgotten. They might never indeed hold their old relation to each other; but, in her solitary musings, Anne conjured up a picture of their being the best of friends again, of her thinking of him as a dear brother, and of his coming to see her occasionally at the lonely country-house. Perhaps, now and then, as she lay on her pillow, she fancied a time when her charge would be over, and when she yet might be Frederick's wife; but, if she did, she never breathed it to herself in the bright light of day, but kept the illusion for the dreamy hours of night.

Does this appear strange? I think not. Even when Anne had so heroically refused to let Frederick wait for her, she had entertained a full conviction that, in spite of all she said, he would wait. His angry parting had, at first, destroyed this opinion; but as time wore on, the secret belief grew again. Anne was of a hopeful, sunny nature. Amid every trial she constantly repeated that "all was for the best." And she now, in the half dreamy-reveries that preceded her sleep at night, allowed her heart to whisper to her that Frederick would yet return, years hence indeed, but nevertheless return.

Daylight, however, which destroys so many illusions, generally banished this. The recollection of his anger at parting, and the fact that he had never been down since, generally sufficed, before she had half finished her toilet, to convince her that her hopes had conquered her reason; and, blushing at her own weakness, she would descend to go through with the duties of the day.

Meantime she frequently heard, in an indirect way, of Frederick. He was well, and rising in

his profession. But no one ever told her that he asked after herself, and she had not the heart to inquire.

Her father, engrossed in business, as we have said, gave her little assistance in the task of forming the minds of her sisters and brothers. He was, indeed, frequently hasty and unjust, as in the case of Ellen. But, on the whole, he was well-meaning: valued, respected, and even loved her dearly: only he gave her no sympathy, because it was not in his nature.

But the children! With all their waywardness, their occasional peevishness, and the other faults incident to their age, they loved Anne, loved her at least as they had never loved their mother: and, in the consciousness of the profound affection she had awakened in them, and in knowing that she was doing her duty, consisted her greatest pleasure.

XI.

ABOUT three years after her mother's death, Anne was relieved, in part, from her charge, by her elder sister becoming a widow and returning to the homestead to live.

Of all the family, this sister best understood Anne. She knew the sacrifice which our heroine had made, and she did justice to the steadfastness with which her duty had been discharged. She now found, in her own sorrow, something

of consolation, by reflecting that her widowhood would enable her to take Anne's place, and thus release our heroine from her promise.

She took an early day to inform Anne, delicately, of her intention.

The vision of unexpected felicity, which this opened to Anne was, at first, too bright almost for belief. Now that the great obstacle which had marred her life's happiness was removed, she regarded all others as of little account. The fear of Frederick's continued anger disappeared. She judged him by herself, and, as she had been faithful, felt assured that he was also. She had faith, too, that in some way they would soon meet; when all would be explained.

She was no longer the same being she had been. Not that she had been morose, or even unhappy before; on the contrary she had been ever calm, agreeable and contented. But her happiness now was of a positive, and no longer of a merely negative character. She went singing about the house in the very excess of her joy. Her heart overflowed in gladness toward every person, and even every inanimate thing. Nature, though it was now summer, appeared to her a perpetual spring. Some of our readers, perhaps, have felt a similar ecstasy at some period of their lives; and, if so, they know her state of mind better than we can describe it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE SACRIFICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 84.

XII.

WINTER had come again, and now Anne was at liberty to accept the often repeated invitation, of her cousins in the city, to visit them.

It was not without a beating heart that she saw the lights of the great town glimmering in the distance, as she approached it toward the close of a December day. She knew that she would probably soon meet Frederick, when his manner would reveal at once whether he continued to love her or not. She had little doubt how it would be; but still there was some uncertainty, just enough to make her heart tremble, without filling it with fear.

Her cousins met her at the door, almost smothering her with kisses. One carried off her bon, another untied the strings of her hat, a third stooped to remove her overshoes, and her uncle, making his way with good-humored violence into the crowd, fairly lifted her in his arms and bore her into the drawing-room. Anne was quite overpowered by the warmth of the welcome, and came near shedding tears. Her uncle saw her emotion, however, and prevented the outburst by a humorous sally that set all laughing.

"Come now," he said, at last, "don't devour Anne, but lets devour the supper, which is smoking hot in the dining-room. Anne must be both hungry and fatigued, yet you keep her from the table, and hang upon her as if she was as strong as Sampson. Take my arm, niece, and let us see whether your cousins can make coffee as well as work crotchet."

The supper was a good old-fashioned one, the very sort of meal for a famished traveller. A smoking beefsteak at the head of the board, coffee, hot cakes, and lighter food for those who chose it. Anne did justice to the steak, as did her uncle; but her less hungry cousins contented themselves with a cold relish. Soon the merry party adjourned again to the drawing-room, where, before a roaring grate-fire, they chatted away till ten o'clock. At that hour apples and nuts were introduced, and the whole group gathered around a round table to eat them.

"I like this way of finishing a winter evening," said her uncle, "it is a good old fashion, and should be kept up. I have no faith in your

modern trifles. Who wants ice-cream on a winter night, to send one to bed shivering?"

When Anne retired, she was shown to a warm, cozy-looking room, with curtains of red French chintz, and a bright fire blazing in the grate. One of her cousins attended her, assisted her to undress, and would have remained watching her until she fell asleep, had she not peremptorily refused to tax her kindness to this extent.

"Oh! we shall have such nice times this winter," said her elder cousin to her, on the following morning. "The opera will be here, the assemblies promise to be superior, and there will be no end to private balls, and musical parties, and other amusements. You deserve a good winter, papa says, to compensate you for your long imprisonment at home. You don't know how pa praises you: he says you are a perfect angel. I was extolling 'Jane Eyre' the other day, but he interrupted me, and said you had displayed more heroism than ever Jane did——"

"You must not tell me this," said Anne, playfully putting her hand on her cousin's mouth, "for it is only your father's partiality. Pray don't—I have self-esteem enough already—more would ruin me."

Cards without number were soon left for Anne, and more invitations than she could accept. The circle in which her cousins moved was large, and what was better for the *debutante* intelligent. The city of —, populous as it is, has still some sets left where neither ignorant wealth, nor impudent fashion has sway, but where good breeding, moral worth and intellectual cultivation hold the control: and the best of these sets, was the one in which Anne now found herself. Her sweetness of disposition and her well-informed mind made her speedily a favorite. The gentlemen almost universally liked her, and some even acknowledged to a warmer sentiment. But she avoided receiving any but the most ordinary courtesies from the younger ones, and was best pleased when her uncle, or some of his friends were conversing with her in one corner. She was not ashamed to decline dancing, because she did not know the Polka; and she won the esteem of a distinguished statesman, a mild-looking, grey-haired man, but one high in the councils of his country, by frankly declaring

that she did not wish to learn this then fashionable dance.

"That is right, my dear young lady," he said. "Manners make laws, as a great philosopher has said, and woe be to our laws when our manners become Parisian. A good old country dance has a hearty merriment in it consistent with the sterling character of our excellent ancestors. A quadrille, though more quiet, is alas! more conventional also; but a quadrille we could endure. The Polka, however, is so thoroughly alien to the American character that it never can take root here, except among mere fashionables and their empty imitators. I wish some one would write the history of these foreign dances, for then, I think, they would be less popular, at least with modest females. The origin of all of them is low, and few are danced in good society at home. We old men look at these things more seriously than young people generally, for we see deeper into them. The free manners introduced by the Polka have already quite changed the sober decorum of our social life, and instead of it we now have a false glare that is perfectly detestable to one familiar with the old order of things. But I tire you. Age, Miss —, is garrulous and didactic. You would rather be in this quadrille, which they are now forming."

Anne would rather have listened to "this old man eloquent" all night; and so she said; but a gentleman came up, at this moment, to whom she had promised her hand in a dance, and she was forced to leave the great and good senator.

XIII.

ANNE had now been in town a fortnight, and yet had heard nothing of her lover. Considering the circumstances under which they had parted, she could not announce her arrival by sending him a card, but must trust to accident to make him acquainted with her presence in the city. He did not mingle much in the set in which her cousins principally moved. He was acquainted with a few families in it, and generally attended their parties, but he did not care much for society, and, therefore, made no effort to extend his acquaintances. Anne's cousins had often met him, but had never been introduced to him. And since her arrival in town he had not been seen by them anywhere.

Only her uncle and his eldest daughter were aware of Anne's former engagement. When, therefore, the conversation turned, one day, on the young physician, her cousins spoke of him with a freedom which otherwise they would have avoided.

"Don't you think him handsome, Cousin Anne?" said one. "He came from your part of the country, and you must have seen him, at

church at least, if nowhere else. Oh! I declare he looks so interesting I could almost fall in love with him."

"That would be useless now, Mary," said another sister, "for rumor says he is engaged to Miss Warren, the daughter of the celebrated physician."

"When did you hear that?"

"At Mrs. B——'s, the other night. You know he visits her, and is always at her parties, for he is a great favorite with her. Well, she told me he had quite deserted her of late; that he was now always at the Warrens; and that it would be a three-fold speculation for him to marry the daughter, because she was not only a beauty and an heiress, but would bring to her husband eventually, if a physician, all her father's practice and position."

"But are you sure there is no mistake about this?" asked the other.

"I have heard of it since, and from several sources. I saw him driving Miss Warren out in a sleigh, the other day; and they looked just like lovers, I assure you. So, Mary dear, keep a sharp look out after that heart of yours, and don't fall in love with a man who is as good as married."

Had the speakers known a title of the anguish that racked Anne's heart during this conversation, they would have ceased long before. Our heroine now understood why she had not seen Frederick. For several days uneasy misgivings as to his faithfulness to her had tormented her mind. She knew that he still kept up a correspondence with numerous acquaintances in the country, who would not have failed to mention so unexpected an event as her widowed sister's return to the homestead and her own visit to the city. Aware of these facts, would he not, if he still loved her, seek to meet her in society, even if pride forbade his calling upon her? Once in her presence, even if accidentally, he could, if he wished, learn whether he was entirely forgotten; and, finding himself still remembered, could renew his engagement without sacrifice of feeling. So had reasoned, so had hoped our heroine. But the conversation to which she had just listened, had destroyed these illusions. She saw now that Frederick had forgotten her, that another possessed his love. Oh! the agony of that moment. She thought, for a moment, that she should die. The power of breathing seemed to abandon her; the room span around; she caught at the chair to keep herself from falling. But, rallying all her strength, for sorrow had taught her great self-command, she choked down her emotions, and rising, left the room, without her cousins having observed her agitation.

Once in her chamber, however, she gave way to

a passionate burst of grief. Though she had herself dismissed Frederick, though she had told herself often that he would cease to love her, the terrible reality that this had come to pass was almost more than she could bear. Her nature, as we have said, was one to love deeply, to love but once. In the solitude and sorrow of the three past years, she had clung to the hope that she and Frederick would yet be united, that Providence would not permit her sacrifice to be in vain. But this bright dream was now dissipated.

At first she had shook under her blow. Sobs, racking her frame, followed sobs; tears rolled, in great drops, over her cheeks; ejaculations, wrung unwillingly from her, told her fierce agony. But at last nature became exhausted. She fell asleep with the tears still on her eye-lashes like a child worn down with much weeping.

When she woke, she woke refreshed. She looked out of the window. The sun was shining on the bright snow; gay equipages were dashing past; and merry sleigh-bells filled the air with jocund music. Her heart caught something of the gaiety without. Hope once more took possession of her bosom.

"I will not despair," she said. "For three years have I waited for this time, and now that it has come I give up at a mere rumor. No, I will hope on, at least until I meet Frederick, and know from his own lips, or from what I see, that he loves another."

XIV.

BY-AND-BYE there was a knock at her door. She rose and opened it, when her elder cousin entered.

"You have not forgotten the opera to-night, Anne, have you?" she said. "I have been looking for you for an hour, to ask you what you intend to wear."

Anne, much as she liked the opera, had forgotten that she was engaged to go to it that evening; but now she turned her mind to it at once. She was not of those young ladies, who, when they do not know they are to meet a certain gentleman, are careless of their dress. On the contrary she was always, not only neat, but elegant in her attire. Yet it was not from vanity that she was thus particular in her personal appearance. The sense of the beautiful, that most glorious gift of heaven to mortal man, was strong within her, and it was exquisite pleasure for her to gratify it in herself, and behold the beautiful in others.

Lovely indeed did Anne look, that evening, as she took her seat in the opera box. She wore a Marie Stuart cap of velvet, trimmed with pearls; and a sacque of black cashmere, edged with white swan's-down. Her rounded arms were bare, but

without ornaments, unless a simple black velvet ribbon clasping the wrist may be called such. The pearly clearness of her complexion was set off to the best effect by this costume, which was also particularly appropriate, as she had worn half mourning since the death of her brother-in-law.

The opera was Norma, that grandest of lyrical dramas: and the part of the priestess was played by Truffi, who seems, in her majestic beauty, as if born solely for the role. Anne was an excellent Italian scholar, and followed the story with ease. She had never heard this opera before, and from the time when the opening chorus burst upon her, to that unequalled scene, in which Norma, after betraying her lover to his enemies, relents, she listened breathlessly. But when that terrible climax was reached, and Norma, torn with agony, began the duett, "*Qual cor tradisti*," Anne was transported with enthusiasm. Her fine artistic mind realized, with the most exquisite pleasure, the skill and genius which had made the entire drama to revolve, as it were, around this one scene, making it the grand central point, as well as crisis of the play. And yet, with all this artistic gratification, there was a feeling of terrible torture. Indeed the situation of Norma and of herself was too similar not to produce emotions of pain. As she saw the agony in Norma's face, and beheld the suffering betrayed by her voice, Anne acknowledged a kindred sorrow, and mechanically repeated to herself the wild expostulation of the priestess.

Just at this instant her eyes fell upon an opposite box for the first time. Her look rested upon its occupants at first abstractedly, but gradually a familiar form there arrested her attention, and she became aware that she saw Frederick at last before her. Nor was he alone. At his side sat a beautiful girl of nineteen, far more beautiful, Anne felt, than herself; and over this fair creature Frederick was bending, apparently with the greatest interest. The lady was evidently saying something in reference to the play, and, as she spoke, she turned her face up to Frederick's with a look of unmistakeable affection. A sharp pang shot through Anne's heart, especially as one of her cousins, noticing the direction of her eyes, whispered,

"That is Miss Warren of whom we were speaking this morning. Won't they make a handsome couple?"

Anne could not answer. She needed now no confirmation of the rumor that Frederick and the heiress were engaged; for her own eyes had seen enough. Her brain grew dizzy: the stage reeled around her; dim noises were in her ears. In vain she struggled to master her emotion.

She felt herself sinking from her seat, and uselessly clutching at the air as she found herself falling, she slid from her chair to the floor. The last sound she heard was the agonizing finale of the duett, ringing in her ears like the sound of the bewailing sea.

Thus, as the tragedy on the stage reached its climax, as great a one, in real life, was passing in the dress-circle. And as the priestess sank, in death, to the boards, a fair form, apparently lifeless, was borne through the lobby.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

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THE SACRIFICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM."

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 131.

XV.

WHEN Anne recovered her consciousness, she was lying in her own chamber, at her uncle's.

At first she did not know where she was. She looked wildly around, at the assembled faces, exclaiming, in disjointed sentences,

"What is all this? Am I sick? Is that you, cousin?"

Then, as memory returned to her, she added, "Ah! I recollect. I was at the opera."

And, with these words, she covered her eyes with her hands, and turned her face to the pillow. She recognized her weakness, and was ashamed to betray it.

As she became stronger she had to meet the thousand inquiries of her cousins respecting the causes of her illness. To them her sudden fainting was incomprehensible. As she could not acknowledge the truth, and would not tell a falsehood, she was forced to maintain reserve: a course of conduct that added to her sorrows, for it was regarded by her cousins as exhibiting a want of confidence in themselves. Her eldest cousin, however, who suspected the truth, did not join in the general injustice: and to her Anne's heart clung with redoubled love.

A week had now passed, yet still Anne, when asked to accompany her cousins out, had refused on the plea of ill health. In reality she felt no disposition for society. Could she have acted as she pleased, she would have returned home, but as half the term appointed for her visit yet remained, she could not leave her uncle without offence, unless by an explanation of the true cause of her departure, and this was impossible.

But she did what she could. She wrote to her sister, telling her she wished to return, and asking that a letter might be sent requesting her presence home.

XVI.

"COME, girls, despatch dinner in haste," said her uncle, one day, as he returned from his office. "Anne has had the dumps so long that I thought a ride would do her good, and accordingly have ordered a carriage to be here early in the afternoon. We will show her some of the beautiful rural spots about our city."

Anne felt in no spirits for the excursion, but

it was so evidently dictated by kindness toward her, that she could not refuse.

The environs of — are, indeed, beautiful; and, in spite of herself, Anne soon became interested in the beautiful scenery around her. Rolling hills, richly cultivated fields, majestic woodlands, and snatches of river scenery seen between openings in the landscape: these continually met Anne's eyes.

At last, toward sunset, they drew up at a fashionable hotel, where supper parties were served: and here her uncle announced his intention of taking their evening meal.

"It will be a variety," he said, "and cheer Anne up. She looks better already. Oh! we'll have you yet as bright as a rose-bud."

The day was bright and beautiful, and unusually warm for the season. While her cousins gathered around the fire, Anne, who was accustomed to long walks, in winter, rose and went out. The hotel had once been a country-seat, and was surrounded by thick woods, now leafless, indeed, but still majestic. A passion for forest trees had always distinguished Anne, and there were several magnificent ones within sight. She bent her steps to the wood, drawing her furs closer around her. The wild wailing of the wind among the bare branches was in unison with her thoughts. There was a sweet melancholy in the sound that was, in her then mood of mind, inexpressibly soothing to her. The sun shining brightly on the brown earth; the blue, clear, winter atmosphere above; the river rippling rough under the sharp breeze; and the columns of white smoke, from the surrounding houses, boldly defined against the sky; these formed a prospect which soon chained Anne's attention. She quickly forgot how long she had been absent from the hotel, and remained, under a giant old tree, watching the landscape, absorbed in her thoughts.

She reflected how much the winter desolation around her was like her own blighted prospects. But she also considered, and this was the beauty of her nature, that though stripped of its summer loveliness, the scene was still pleasing; for had it not bright sunshine, a cloudless sky, and a bracing air.

"So may it be with me," she said, half aloud.

"There are many things left to make even me happy. Why, then, should I sinfully repine?"

As she spoke, a deep sigh startled her. She remembered at once the indiscretion she had been guilty of, in speaking thus aloud; and, in some embarrassment, looked around for the intruder.

What was her astonishment to see Frederick standing near her, his eyes fixed sorrowfully on her face?

The surprise was so great that, for a moment, she was sensible only of it; but soon came the mortifying conviction that he must have overheard her. Now he, of all persons, was the one she least wished to betray herself before. Her shame so overpowered her that, in her weak and nervous state, she could not resist it; but sank to the ground.

XVII.

SHE did not, however, lose her consciousness. She saw Frederick spring to assist her, and this probably saved her from fainting; for, too proud to exhibit further weakness before him, she partially rallied, by a strong effort.

His arm was already supporting her; his face was full of tender concern; but she slid from his touch, saying, with quiet dignity,

"Thank you, sir. I can easily stand alone."

Frederick looked at her earnestly, as if to assure himself that she could thus coldly address him: then sighed, and turned away.

He had not gone more than a step, however, when he seemed to change his mind. He retraced that step, and confronted Anne, now trembling from the re-action.

"And is it thus we meet?"

He spoke, half reproachfully, half tenderly. In spite of the wrong he had done her, Anne was affected almost to tears. She looked down on the ground, but made no answer.

"And is it thus we meet, Anne?" he said.

Perceiving that she would be compelled to answer, Anne conquered her emotion, and said coldly,

"I am not aware, sir, that there is anything, in my meeting, peculiar." Then she added, as she saw he was about to speak,

"My friends are waiting for me at the hotel. and will wonder at my protracted absence. Suffer me to pass."

He drew aside, and raised his hat. But as she walked by, with whatever of proud unconcern she could assume, their eyes met; and the tender, reproachful look of his went to her heart, and followed her footsteps, accusing her.

She began to think she had been, perhaps, too cold and rude. If he did love another, was he censurable, for had she not long ago discharged him? He evidently bore a tender recollection of

the past, else his demeanor would not have been what it was. As she thus speculated, her footsteps insensibly grew slower.

Presently she heard a quick tread on the walk behind her, and, in a moment, Frederick was at her side.

His voice was flurried as he spoke.

"Pardon me, Anne," he said, "but I cannot part with you thus. It is years since we met. I have just learned that the causes which banished me are removed. I have heard that your widowed sister has returned home. Oh! Anne, I love you still; and yet you are cruel."

She began to quicken her pace. He eagerly continued,

"The hard fate that separates us is, then, to have no alleviation? Anne, pitiless Anne, you know not the misery you inflict. I have remembered you, only to find myself forgotten."

At first, as we have said, Anne had regretted her coldness. But language like this, from one engaged to another woman, struck her as a gratuitous insult. She faced the speaker indignantly.

"Sir," she said, "what do you mean? How dare you?"

He started back amazed. But gradually the color rose to his brow; and he, in turn, felt indignant. He, however, controlled himself, and resumed.

"I leave you," he said, "since my presence is so hateful. But you have destroyed all my hopes in life, and all my faith in womanhood. Farewell."

His words perplexed his hearer. Could he venture so far on her old affection, Anne asked herself, as thus to insult her with hypocritical professions, or had some misunderstanding between him and Miss Warren arisen, which had induced him to seek revenge on her by marrying Anne. The latter she thought most probable.

"You should have learned faith in womanhood from Miss Warren," she answered accordingly; and not without a touch of irony in her voice.

"Miss Warren!" replied he, in increased amazement, "what has she to do with me?"

This man, thought Anne, is strangely altered from when I knew him; for he is now the prince of dissimulators. She answered, therefore, with contempt,

"The world says Miss Warren is the betrothed of Dr. Vernon, and his own behavior, when in her society, verifies it. When, therefore, he dares to address the language of love to another woman, he sinks himself beneath scorn."

As she spoke she turned again, and, with a haughty step, moved toward the hotel.

But a hand was laid on her arm, forcibly

detaining her, and Frederick was speaking fast and eagerly.

"There is some terrible mistake here, Anne," he said. "I am not—I never was betrothed to Miss Warren—she has long been affianced to another. You speak of my conduct toward that lady as corroborating the impression that we are engaged; I do not know what you mean. Some one has been belying me. We are dear friends—almost brother and sister—but mostly more. No one who knew us could suppose differently. As heaven is my judge, I have never, for one instant, swerved in my fidelity to you. Oh! believe me, Anne, there is cruel slander here."

The breathless energy with which he spoke was a guarantee of his sincerity. Anne felt already half convinced that she had been laboring under a delusion.

"I heard but yesterday of your being in the city," he said, "and was speculating whether I dare venture to call on you, when accident threw us together here. Who is it that has been traducing me to you?"

Anne, blushing and agitated, faltered out, "I saw you and Miss Warren at the opera, about a week ago—"

"The night *Norma* was played," interposed he.

"That was the evening. And I am sure—at least I thought—indeed I was not singular in believing that your demeanor toward Miss Warren was peculiar—was marked—"

She could not go on. His clear, frank eye gazed right into her soul, and she felt that she had been jealous without cause. She looked down embarrassed and ashamed.

There was a silence of a moment, and then Frederick spoke.

"I can well believe, when I reflect on it myself, Anne," he said, "that my demeanor toward Miss Warren did seem to substantiate the report of our engagement, for we are the closest of friends, and, in the absence of her lover, who but yesterday returned from Europe, I have been her constant attendant. I never before, however, heard this absurd rumor. Lucy will laugh heartily at it. The idea alone never entered either of our heads, I am sure. Our hearts have both been pre-occupied from childhood. And now, dear Anne, are you still angry?"

He ventured to take her hand, as he spoke, a liberty not wholly without warrant; for, during his last explanation, he had met her eyes full of gentle entreaty.

What Anne would have replied we know not exactly; but she was spared the necessity of a direct answer by the appearance of her youngest cousin.

The merry girl came running from the hotel, exclaiming, "where are you, Anne? Supper is

ready. How can you stay out so long in the cold?"

But recognizing a gentleman in company with Anne, she stopped suddenly.

We said that Anne did not answer directly. But she replied quite as effectually as if she had, when she turned to her companion, exclaiming,

"Will you join our party, Frederick? I am sure my uncle will be glad to see you."

The sweet smile with which these words were uttered left no doubt of her meaning; and the invitation was at once accepted. Nor did two happier hearts ever beat than those of Anne and her lover, as they sat side by side at that winter-evening meal. Such a glorious supper they both thought it; and not without reason.

XVIII.

THE bloom soon came back to Anne's cheek, and the light to her eye. Her uncle vowed he had never known an excursion to work such wonders, and that henceforth he should regard an afternoon ride as the best of prescriptions. Anne smiled and blushed; for she knew the old man loved a jest; and she was too happy to be angry at being teased.

Frederick was now a daily visitor in — street. When snow came, he was the first with his sleigh; and many a pleasant hour the lovers spent whirling in the light machine over the frosty road. Anne now went less than ever into society, but from a different reason. She preferred to spend the evening with Frederick, in the quiet of her uncle's parlor, while the old man read the evening paper, chatting, at intervals, with his guests.

At Frederick's request, Miss Warren called with him, one morning, to make the acquaintance of Anne. Our heroine was charmed with her lover's friend, and the two soon became almost inseparable. Anne now learned that Miss Warren had been Frederick's confidant from the first; and when they were better acquainted, there was more than one harmless jest spoken in reference to Anne's jealousy.

As the marriage of Miss Warren was soon to take place, Frederick made it his plea that Anne would consent to be his on the same day. After some correspondence between Frederick and her father, it was finally arranged that it should be so; and that the wedding should be given at her uncle's, Mr. Malcolm coming up to the festivities.

In all these negotiations Anne affected no foolish coyness; but frankly told Frederick that as she had promised to be his, she would name whatever day her friends fixed for her.

Nature lent a cloudless sky for the marriage morning. Both brides drove to the same church,

and were united at the same altar. Never had Anne looked so lovely, and notwithstanding the nervousness of the hour, never had she been happier. She had implicit trust now in the man to whom she gave her hand, and what is more, the pleasing satisfaction of knowing she had, under trying circumstances, done her duty. Her husband, as they drove away, adverted to this.

"Do you know, dearest, he said, "that I love you a thousand times better for having discharged me, after your mother's death? You acted wisely and rightly under the then circumstances; but I bless God that circumstances have changed."

"Ah! Frederick," was her reply, as she looked fondly up into his face, "does not God make and unmake circumstances, and always for the best? If we do our duty, he will not desert us. I feel that I owe my present felicity to having made what, at the time, I thought a great sacrifice.

Had I acted otherwise, had I disregarded my mother, remorse would have haunted me forever."

"You were right," said Frederick, kissing her, "and I was wrong. Ah! Anne, you are an angel."

"Nay, not that—only a loving woman."

"But a woman in a thousand."

"Nor even that. A poor, weak creature, who strives to do her duty, and leaves the rest to God."

Frederick and Anne are still living, and still as happy as when first married. Not that they are without occasional troubles, for all, in this earthly sphere, must expect sorrow. But Frederick and Anne look on the cares of life as a gentle chastening, sent, by their Heavenly Father, to discipline them for a better world; and holding these sentiments, they do their duty uncomplainingly, and look forward with hope for their eternal reward.